

# 2007: Year of bald-faced racial affronts

Civil society endured coarse celebrity chatter, plus implied domestic terrorism

By CHERYL DEVALL

Maybe they never went away. But this was the year bald-faced racial affronts – the symbolic dangling nooses, the “n” word, the casual, just-for-widely-syndicated laughs reference to “nappy-headed ho’s” – roared back into civilized discourse. Before 2007 wrapped up, each of these would command its day in the court of public opinion.

Opposition to the disparate treatment of white high school students who strung ropes in a tree and their African-American schoolmates who fought back coalesced a shouting, marching “movement” around Jena, Louisiana’s interpretation of justice. It moved from the small Louisiana town to the doors of the Justice



Department in Washington D.C. But people in other American towns made sure the doggone nooses kept showing up – in college dormitories, in fire station houses, wherever somebody

apparently got the idea that it was time to spook those uppity people into despairing silence.

How offensive could that be? After all, when those people refer to each other in the movies and hip hop lyrics they use that word they keep saying is the most offensive epithet of all. Aren’t they being a little too sensitive when they pipe up – as the heavenly host of African-American opinion leaders did, not to mention the entire Los Angeles City Council – sounded when they urged everyone to stop using it, already?

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Photos: Don Imus [npr.org], Rutgers basketball women [viewimages.com]

**INSIDE:** ‘One drop,’ [review]; nominate alumni association officers, page 2

## Book Review

**One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life – A Story of Race and Family Secrets**

By Bliss Broyard [Little, Brown and Company, September 2007, \$24.99]

By WAYNE DAWKINS

Anatole Broyard was a star book critic with The New York Times from the 1970s through the late '80s then he retired because he was ill with prostate cancer. Near death in 1990, he could not bring himself to tell his son and daughter a secret. Wife Alexandra broke the news to Todd and Bliss: Dad was part black, or, a Creole from New Orleans.



Five years after Broyard's death, his secret life became public when scholar Henry Louis Gates profiled the critic in the New Yorker magazine and the piece later became a chapter in a book. A dozen years later, daughter Bliss digs deeper with "One Drop." Her 500-plus page biography is divided into three parts. Initially, Bliss is on a journey of self-discovery. She's mortified that at least once she entertained school pals with a racist joke about blacks. And the formerly clueless, upper middle-class girl from a Waspy Connecticut suburb begins paying attention to American race relations.

When Bliss begins searching for Broyard kin, she annoys people straddling both sides of the color line, blacks who assume she has had an easy life because her family lived in the white world, and Creoles who stealthily assimilated into white America and had no use for her pointing out that they have black roots. Readers either will be annoyed by Bliss's naivete, or appreciative of her candor.

The best part of the book is probably the 175-page second act. Here, Bliss does a genealogical dig for several generations of Broyards in New Orleans and constructs a historical narrative of critical moments in American race relations. Creoles of color lived precarious lives in Louisiana in the 1800s. Many of them were well educated and skilled in numerous fields [carpentry was the Broyard family specialty] but their right to marry, own property and vote was at the mercy of the state and federal government. The Plessy vs. Ferguson case, for example, was about a light, near-white black man from Louisiana who was prosecuted for sitting in a whites-only railroad car. That defeat at the hands of the U.S. Supreme Court established American apartheid for a half century.

In searching for her great-great and great grandparents, Bliss described "redemption," the murderous tactics of white paramilitary groups in order to deny blacks' voting rights. J-school dean Nicholas Lemann last year wrote the book "Redemption" about the same episode in history.

Journalists take note that the godfather of Bliss' great-grandfather was editor of the first black daily newspaper in America, the New Orleans Tribune.

*Dawkins is a 1980 Columbia J-school graduate. His encyclopedia entry about Anatole Broyard is scheduled for publication in the Oxford Encyclopedia of African-American History from 1896-2006.*

Message from Nicholas Lemann, dean:

**Revitalized Columbia Journalism Alumni Association**

I am very pleased to announce the creation of a newly revitalized Journalism School Alumni Association based on the recommendations of the Alumni Association Task Force and Transition Team

Its success depends on your involvement, and I hope many of you will volunteer to serve on the first board. There are 9,192 graduates of the Journalism School living around the world and we want this to be a truly representative body. We look forward to hearing from you.

More information is available at: [www.jm.columbia.edu/alumni/association](http://www.jm.columbia.edu/alumni/association)

# Year of bald-faced racial affronts

Continued

It's about freedom of speech, isn't it – the right to convey exasperation or disdain or whatever comes to mind about those people by any symbolic or verbal means necessary. That's all Don Imus and his cohorts were doing when they yucked it up about the Rutgers women's basketball team on live radio. Just ask the heavenly host of white opinion leaders, many of whom regularly appeared on his top-rated show. What a business of *mea culpas* and withdrawn advertising all that set off. Until the smoke had cleared and, before the end of the year, Imus had landed a comfortable berth with another radio network that'll lengthen his 7-second on-air delay to 21 seconds. That'll show him!

## Intra racial divide

Besides, it's not as if African-Americans have been feeling too kindly about one another – at least if you believe a late-in-the-year Pew Research Center poll [www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org). For the first time in the history of the survey, more than one-third of the black respondents said they did not consider all blacks as part of a single race (just over half of those polled maintained otherwise).

The differences, it appears, have to do with values and social status – how many of us, growing up, heard from our parents *don't go around thinking you're any better than anyone else, but don't let me catch you with those hoodlums down the block?* Perhaps now, people are just more willing to say that in public. Call it ... freedom of speech. Upward of 60 percent of the Pew poll respondents said the values of middle class and poor blacks have become more different. That finding, along with downbeat assessments of the fairness of the criminal justice system (see Jena, Louisiana above) and the persistence of everyday racial disparities (see every paragraph before this one) led the pollsters to conclude that African-Americans are less upbeat than at any time in the last half-century about our prospects for the future.

Add to that a Brookings Institution report [www.economicmobility.org](http://www.economicmobility.org) that indicates blacks born into middle-class households during the late 1960s are much more likely than whites to earn less than their parents – even as two-thirds of all adult children in the study earned more, adjusted for inflation, than their parents.



Put another way, success in the black children protects white CEO Stan O'Neil black and brown



Brookings scholar Julia Isaacs wrote, "Economic parental generation ... does not appear to protect from future economic adversity the same way it children." The children of ousted Morgan Stanley might relate, as might the children of countless parents whose sub-prime home mortgages turned

sour in a financial morass that threatens to rock the international economy. No wonder Jay-Z's rapping about Euros – it's sure not all about the devalued Benjamins any more.

Photos: Stan O'Neil [[msnbc.msn.com](http://msnbc.msn.com)], Barack Obama [[senate.gov](http://senate.gov)], Barry Bonds [[msnbc.msn.com](http://msnbc.msn.com)]

## The contender

What is working well for us? Let's see ... Barack Obama, the most promising black presidential candidate ever, continues to duke it out for money, momentum and those elusive qualities, electability and – lamentably – black-enough-ness. At this writing he's still a serious contender heading into the earliest primaries in history.



A brother landed the coveted title of Major League Baseball's all-time home run hitter. But quick, whip out that asterisk – former San Francisco Giants' free agent Barry Bonds is under federal indictment on suspicion he'd lied about taking performance-enhancing steroids. Make it a box full of asterisks for all his MLB colleagues implicated in the Mitchell Report. Fleet-footed, charming endorsement magnet Marion Jones tearfully admitted this year she'd done the same before the Sydney Olympic Games; the disgraced sprinter has returned her multiple medals. (Speaking of disgraced: O.J.'s back in the

criminal justice system. 'Nuff said about that.)

Continued on next page



## Year in review/Continued

At least, for now, there are still news organizations, even the Murdoch-owned Wall Street Journal, reporting all this – although they employ far fewer of us than a year ago. One whose storied newspaper career fell from a plagiarism scandal, not from economics – former New York Times managing editor Gerald Boyd – might appreciate that someone checked into his side of the story. A profile in the November issue of New York magazine <http://nymag.com/news/features/40647/index8.html> has journalists of color talking about the state of our business a year after Boyd died.

And former colleagues, are taking up the mantle of the journalist in 14 years to fall investigation into the a thuggish outfit many local



journalism students and scribes Chauncey Bailey never met Oakland Post editor who became the first American victim to a domestic assassin – apparently because his nefariously messy finances of Your Black Muslim Bakery, leaders had given a great big pass.



That kind of journalism – and so many dogged, daily efforts to cover the workings and failings of government, the surprising human stories and the boring-but-important things people in a damaged democracy need to know – serve as reminders why we need journalism.

So does the sad fact that, unless you read a newspaper or a serious magazine, watch or listen to network news or know someone in the military (and ever-fewer people in this country fall into any of those categories), you would hardly know the United States is at war.

*Cheryl Devall, J-'82, is deputy news editor at public station KPCC-FM in Los Angeles.*

Photos: Marion Jones [msnbc.msn.com], Gerald Boyd [nieman.harvard.edu], Chauncey Bailey [maynardije.org]

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism was founded in May 1980 and since July the group has published a monthly newsletter. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. We publish job changes and moves, news about books and films published or produced by alumni, and family milestones. And of course we keep alumni connected to news from the Columbia GSJ. Log on to our Web site at [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) or see our link on the home page of [www.blackjournalist.com](http://www.blackjournalist.com) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, **contributing editors** E-mail tips, comments, suggestions to [wdaw69643@aol.com](mailto:wdaw69643@aol.com) Or call 800-268-4338

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## Garland scholar shines during presidential campaign coverage



Want evidence of a return on your investment?

A'Letia Bundles, '76, and I thought you might like to know that the contributions many alumni and friends made last year to the Phyllis T. Garland Memorial Scholarship are supporting Lylah Holmes, a spring candidate for graduation, who made waves last month on the "Charlie Rose Show" [PBS].

During coverage of the Iowa presidential caucuses, Rose interviewed longtime political reporters and analysts, and he also interviewed Holmes, a younger voice who was reporting and videotaping the campaign of U.S. Sen. Barack Obama,

D-III., for her master's project.

Here's the video.

[www.charlierose.com/shows/2008/01/04/1/politics-after-iowa](http://www.charlierose.com/shows/2008/01/04/1/politics-after-iowa)

Lylah Holmes' segment runs from 31:55 to 53:55

Thanks to many of you who replied to the e-mail blast in mid-January. With alumni and friends' support, we can meet our endowment goal of \$100,000 by the end of this year.

Send gifts, payable Columbia University and noting "Phyllis T. Garland Scholarship" in the lower left, to Columbia University GSI, 2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027.

Attention: Jodi Lipper or Sharon M. Fox.

— Wayne Dawkins, '80

## J-Alumni on the '08 campaign trail



The national press corps covering the presidential campaigns includes Columbia journalism alumni Suzanne Malveaux, '91, of CNN, and Ron Claiborne, '75, of ABC in Iowa. Here is a sample of their coverage from the Iowa caucuses:

[www.maynardjje.org/columns/dickprince/080102\\_prince/](http://www.maynardjje.org/columns/dickprince/080102_prince/)

The next stop was the first primary in New Hampshire. This month, the coverage escalates in large, diverse and multiple states.



An appreciation

## Thomas Morgan III, NABJ and social crusader

By WAYNE DAWKINS

Thomas Morgan III, the eighth president of the National Association of Black Journalists, who lived with the AIDS virus for two decades, died Dec. 24 while visiting in Massachusetts. He was 56.

Morgan was the first gay president of the largest association of journalists of color, yet he did not allow sexual orientation to define the way he led NABJ. As Sheila Stainback, J-01, noted at the Jan. 19 memorial service attended by about 300 people at the New York Times Center, surrogates of opposing presidential candidates tried a whispering campaign to undermine Morgan, but when the votes were counted, he won in a landslide.

Morgan just had too much credibility. Before his presidency, he was treasurer from 1983-89, and during that period he moved NABJ's finances into the modern era. Morgan's terms as treasurer began with \$50,000 in NABJ accounts. He grew the portfolio to \$1 million by the end of the 1980s. Since I witnessed Morgan's stewardship first-hand as a fellow board member, here is a 1986 anecdote from my 1997 book, "Black Journalists: The NABJ Story":

*The rodeo plus cookout was a rousing success, so much so it alarmed Tom Morgan. He discreetly summoned four board members to his hotel room. Morgan was carrying \$20,000 in cash from the rodeo and other on-site convention revenues. He was scared. Morgan did not have the means to secure the money in an account. A robbery or burglary at the hotel could rob NABJ of crucial funds. Morgan could be forever scandalized trying to explain the disappearance of funds. Board members sat on the bed and counted \$20, \$10, \$5 and \$1 bills, confirming the amount for the treasurer.*

As president, Morgan spoke softly yet proved he had a spine of steel. In 1991, he vowed to pull our association out of an industry coalition if foot dragging on diversity – the task the task force was supposed to be accomplishing – continued. A year later, NABJ leaders plus three dozen newspaper publishers and other executives convened at the Pierre Summit, a closed-door meeting at the landmark New York City hotel. A number of people at the memorial service owe their leadership positions to that meeting. Resolute and strong, Morgan lit the fire that sparked change.

Morgan was strong in other subtle ways. His longtime partner Tom Ciano revealed that Morgan had been

HIV-positive since 1987, yet he ran for president and won, and in addition, completed a Nieman fellowship at Harvard University during the first year of his two-year presidency.

At the memorial, Marcus Mabry, the longtime Newsweek writer and new New York Timesman, said Morgan revealed his strength when he appeared physically weak, bony, glassy-eyed, and apparently near death in the mid-1990s. Morgan continued to live fiercely. When disease prevented him from





**Tom Morgan/Continued**

doing journalism, a craft he practiced so elegantly at the Miami Herald, Washington Post, then New York Times, he served as an AIDS awareness and prevention activist, and he engaged in conservation and home renovation on the south shore of Long Island, N.Y.

In his last three years of life, said Ciano, Morgan was hospitalized 25 times. His daily routine involved popping 50 pills to combat the disease. Morgan fought on rather than give in to adversity and for that he will be a lasting inspiration to many people he served.

**More reading:**

[www.nytimes.com/2007/12/27/hvregion/27morgan.html?ex=1356411600&en=ec340c692d1aaf77&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/27/hvregion/27morgan.html?ex=1356411600&en=ec340c692d1aaf77&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss) New York Times story

[www.maynardj.org/columns/dickprince/071224\\_prince-morgan/](http://www.maynardj.org/columns/dickprince/071224_prince-morgan/) Journal-isms by Richard Prince

**PHOTO:** Will Sutton, Gayle Pollard, J-'73, Doug Lyons, J-'74, Alexis Yancey, Tom Morgan, and Wayne Dawkins, J-'80, all NABJ board members, following the first West Coast meeting, 1984 [From the Dawkins archives].

**People**

In a Jan. 19 column, **Rob Parker, '88**, [photo] urged Tiger Woods to speak up about the poor choices of words and images that have resulted in firings and reprimands of sports journalists who cover the superstar. Visit

[www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20080119/OPINION03/801190317/343/SPORTS08](http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20080119/OPINION03/801190317/343/SPORTS08)

**Olga Joseph, '92**, told us, "I couldn't be happier living in Texas where I work as a meteorologist for KXXV-TV (ABC)." ... **Amy Stroud-Jackson, '90**, lives in the Philadelphia region and is vice president of content strategy at Merrill Lynch. Stroud-Jackson works with the totalmerrill.com Web site. ... "Teflon Don" Imus is back in the saddle, wrote Bergen Record columnist **Lawrence Aaron, '70**, of the radio jock who



returned to the airwaves in December after an eight-month time-out for verbally assaulting Rutgers University women student-athletes. ... **Elizabeth Atkins, '91**, [photo] appeared on BET's "Meet the Faith" Dec. 9 to talk about biracial identity and presidential candidate Barack Obama, whose biracial identity has been scrutinized. Visit <http://blogs.bet.com/shows/meetthefait/?p=143> ... And you thought you were having a bad hair day? Check out **Tania Padgett's, '95**, piece from Newsday about ethnic hairstyles that cause uneasiness at the office:

[www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/northwest/chicwire\\_ethnic\\_hair\\_1205\\_1212dec12.1.3429739.story?ctrack=1&cset=true](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/northwest/chicwire_ethnic_hair_1205_1212dec12.1.3429739.story?ctrack=1&cset=true)

**Budget Update**

In the 2007 fiscal year from Dec. 16, 2006 to Dec. 15, 2007, BA N received \$708 in subscription revenues from 19 individuals. Ten of the 19 renewed or initiated a subscription at the two-year \$40 rate.

Over the years, BA N has been in a state of cost shifting. Traditionally, postage was our biggest expense; it is now about \$200 per year because at least 80 percent of the newsletter "press run" is distributed electronically. Printing is about \$260 for the 40 copies sent monthly via the U.S. Postal Service. What remains are expenses for utilities such as telephone, Internet, and bank service charges.

Our newsletter is an institution and a service that must be nourished and maintained in order to thrive. Thanks to those who promptly answered calls to renew or start subscriptions. We ask more of you to step forward and support the Black Alumni Network.

## Jobline & Opportunities

The Department of Communications at Xavier University of Louisiana invites applications for a tenure track **assistant or associate professor** in the area of **print journalism** to begin August of 2008. Candidates should possess evidence of teaching excellence and a scholarly agenda. Ph.D. with professional/teaching experience required; ABD with extensive professional/teaching experience considered. Successful candidates will teach courses in feature writing, news editing, writing for print media and general mass communication courses. Other responsibilities include advising the student newspaper and developing an online edition. Candidates should submit a letter of application including; statement of teaching and research interests, a curriculum vitae, relevant course syllabi, a sample of scholarly writing and three letters of recommendation to: Arnold L. Crump, Search Committee Chair at [acrump@xula.edu](mailto:acrump@xula.edu). Xavier University of Louisiana, [www.xula.edu](http://www.xula.edu) is a historically Black and Catholic institution located in New Orleans. Review of applications began last November and will continue until the position is filled.

At Newsday, the Opinion pages seek a curious, well-rounded **assistant editor** with a wide range of interests in political, social and cultural issues to be responsible for managing the section's territory on the Web. The editor will help assign and edit opinion copy by outside contributors. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to edit copy skillfully and establish productive, collaborative relationships with contributors. Preference will be given to candidates with prior Web experience, including the use of HTML and Photoshop. Experience shooting and editing video is a plus. Contact Rita Ciolli, 631-843-2700

The Herald News, a daily located 15 miles from Times Square in gritty, newsy Passaic County, NJ, has an opening for a full-time **sports copy editor**. We prefer candidates with at least a year of daily sports copy editing and design experience. Quark Xpress experience is a must and several years of daily newspaper reporting experience is preferred. The job involves night and weekend hours. Those interested in applying should send a cover letter, resume and your five best work samples to Jeff Roberts, sports editor, Herald News, 1 Garret Mountain Plaza, P.O. Box 471, West Paterson, NJ 07424.

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism was founded in May 1980 and since July the group has published a monthly newsletter. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. We publish job changes and moves, news about books and films published or produced by alumni, and family milestones. And of course we keep alumni connected to news from the Columbia GSJ. Log on to our Web site at [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) or see our link on the home page of [www.blackjournalist.com](http://www.blackjournalist.com) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, **contributing editors** E-mail tips, comments, suggestions to [wdaw69643@aol.com](mailto:wdaw69643@aol.com) Or call 800-268-4338

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\$25 one year

\$40 two years



## Double your giving, double your fun

\$5K matching gift intended to boost Phyl Garland scholarship fund

An anonymous donor brought a gift and an incentive challenge to the **Black Alumni Network/Phyllis T. Garland Memorial Scholarship** drive: Beginning this month, donations will be matched up to \$5,000 for this year. That means Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism alumni and friends effectively double their giving because of the anonymous support.

Furthermore, the donor's generosity is extended for three years at \$5,000 per year for a total of \$15,000, said Nancy Bobrowitz of the Development and Alumni Relations office.

The anonymous gift is intended to accelerate the drive to raise at least \$100,000 in order to endow the Garland fund, so interest can provide annual \$5,000 scholarship gifts for needy students. Last November, BA Newsletter reported that \$64,920 in gifts and pledges had been collected.



Garland [1935-2006, photo], the first tenured black woman professor at the J-school, taught for 31 years and retired in 2004.

Graduates Dani McLain and Sabrina Ford received BA Network scholarships in 2006 and 2007. Lylah Holmes, a broadcast student, is this year's BA Network/Garland scholar.

Send gifts, payable to Columbia University and noting "Phyllis T. Garland Scholarship" in the lower left of the check, to:

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, 2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027.  
Attention: Jodi Lipper or Sharon M. Fox.

## J-Alumni leaders chosen; Peterkin, Pollard-Terry in the mix

Twenty graduates were nominated to the board of the Columbia University Journalism Alumni Association, with Alexis Gelber '80, director of special projects for Newsweek, and Michael Kubin '05, CEO and managing director of Ionic Media, Inc. named chair and vice chair respectively.

"The graduates bring a wealth of experience to the board," said A'Lelia Bundles '76, chair of the nominating committee, in a statement released by the school. "We are pleased to nominate a board that is truly representative of our alumni and reflects its diversity of profession, geography, age, gender and ethnicity."

Continued on page 3

## Yes, Obama's positions are more than just talk



Last month U.S. Sen. Barack Obama was ridiculed by U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton for having inspiring rhetoric – but no concrete plans or experience – that would qualify him to become president.

What a difference seasonal change makes in a long-distance presidential run. Last summer when the Obama campaign looked earnest, but unlikely to succeed, other candidates criticized Obama for giving supporters *too many* details and wonky policy proposals. Sometimes on the stump he still sounded like the University of Chicago law professor he'd been.

### Wayne Dawkins/Commentary

Back then, Obama said that if voters elected him he'd meet with foreign leaders the United States found repugnant, including Iran's head of state, without preconditions. [www.maynarddije.org/columns/dickprince/070813\\_prince/](http://www.maynarddije.org/columns/dickprince/070813_prince/) His idea was criticized as naïve, but the senator did not back down. Then, Obama was part of a crowded Democratic presidential field. Now, he's the last man standing, toe to toe with Clinton.

Obama must have adjusted his game plan, because his speeches in January and February have been less specific, yet soaring. He has connected with many voters, like one college student in Houston who, during an NPR interview, scoffed at Clinton and pundits' claims that Obama was "all hat and no cattle" as a number of Texans like to say. [www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=86894288](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=86894288)

He was supposed to be history after the 22-state Super Tuesday primaries that included mega states California, New York and Illinois. The so-called experts assumed that then frontrunner Clinton would deliver the knockout punch to Obama and cruise to the Democratic convention in August. Instead, Clinton and the senator from Illinois battled to a draw. Then Obama had the audacity of hope to inch ahead of the senator from New York during the Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia primaries Feb. 12.

Lately, Clinton looks punch drunk after watching Obama win Wisconsin a week later and pick off a lot of her presumed support among white women and organized labor. Clinton's claim that unlike Obama "she can take a punch" from presumed GOP opponent U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona, does not seem so credible any more.

### Obama is acting presidential – and rising – while Clinton is flailing and sinking

Obama will have to prepare for a more desperate fight on March 4, when he and Clinton compete for delegate-rich Texas, plus Ohio. Clinton may have expected Obama to be competitive, but not to beat her up and take her lunch money.

She has no choice but to come out swinging, or blazing, since her biggest battleground is the Lone Star state. Unless she wins in a 60/40 landslide, which appears less likely with each passing day, Clinton will not gain ground on Obama in the hunt for delegates.

At this writing, Obama is acting and sounding presidential – and rising – while Clinton is flailing and sinking.

Continued on next page

## Dawkins/Continued

**TRAIL MIX:** Kudos to J-'86 grad **Marjorie Valbrun** for her Feb. 27 commentary, "To Denounce and Reject: Why the Farrakhan litmus test must go," on "The Root" Web site. [www.theroot.com/id/45012/page/1](http://www.theroot.com/id/45012/page/1)

Does the campaign refrain "change" have meaning?

Consider this: Has anyone noticed that we've had a near monarchy in the Oval Office for the last 20 years? First George H. W. Bush occupied the White House from 1989-93, then the Clintons – Bill plus Hillary – took over from 1993-2001. Son George W. Bush sublet his parents' former place in 2001, and his lease expires in January 2009.

If Hillary Clinton wins in November, she and her husband the former president could stay through 2017. For two decades, the only executive branch change Americans have experienced is Bushes and Clintons changing places at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

*Dawkins is editor of the B A Network newsletter, and he is a member of the Trotter Group, [www.trottergroup.org](http://www.trottergroup.org)*

## J-Alumni leaders chosen/Continued

The other members of the board include longtime Black Alumni Network participants **David Peterkin '82**, executive director of news practices for ABC News, and **Gayle Pollard Terry '73** [photo], a Los Angeles-based freelance writer who for about three decades was a journalist at the Los Angeles Times, Boston Globe and Miami Herald.



Nearly 50 alumni submitted nominations for the new board, the culmination of a year-long process. Two years ago, an Alumni Association Task Force met to examine the mission, goals and best practices of a journalism school's alumni association, following the lead of Columbia University which undertook an examination of its own Alumni Association. With the guidance of an outside consultant, the Task Force – which included **Bundles, Wayne Dawkins, '80, Frances Hardin, '77, and Marquita Pool-Eckert, '69** – developed a strategic plan, which included a mission statement, primary goals and strategies. During the past year, a transition team had the opportunity to lay the foundation for an Alumni Association that would work closely with the alumni relations office and serve as a link between the School and its alumni.

"The transition team's recommendations are designed to provide a framework for the future," Bundles said. "But it will be up to the new board to devise ways to implement the proposals and to stay true to the mission of creating "a lifelong bond among alumni and [connecting] them to the students and faculty of the School" while also working "in partnership with the School and its Alumni Office to engage a diverse group of graduates worldwide through programs and services that address the needs of its members."

## Columbia J-School Alumni Weekend 2008

Return, reconnect, rediscover April 3-5 in NYC

Registration deadline is March 20

Alumni are encouraged to register online at

[www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/reunions](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/reunions)

Recent alumni from the classes of 1998-2007 are exempt from paying \$25 processing fees. **Addie Rimmer** [1978], and **Lisa Rhodes** [1988] are among 32 class reunion agents.

## UNITY '08 Chicago: Early birds help themselves, NABJ

March 14 is the deadline to get the lowest possible registration rate for the UNITY Journalists of Color convention, July 23-27 at McCormick Place in Chicago, the fourth summit of the associations of black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American journalists.

NABJ members can register for as little as \$325 and students for \$150.

After March 14, rates increase. To sign up, visit [www.2008unity.org/registration.cfm](http://www.2008unity.org/registration.cfm)

Note that in order to reserve a hotel room at the convention discount, attendees must register.

Registration revenues collected before June 13 will be split among the partner associations, so it is crucial that attendees act promptly to also support the fiscal health of their organizations.

The Black Alumni Network of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, contributing editors E-mail tips, comments to [wdaw69643@aol.com](mailto:wdaw69643@aol.com) or call 800-268-4338

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### Black

### Alumni

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Profile in courage? Page 2

**Network** Newsletter / Our 28<sup>th</sup> year/ April 2008/ Vol. 28, No. 4

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# Columbia J-School Alumni Weekend 2008

Return, reconnect, rediscover April 3-5 in NYC

6:30-7:30 p.m., Friday April 4

## Alumni Awards Ceremony

Steve Kroft, '75, "60 Minutes," Master of Ceremonies, Low Library

### Awardees:



**Margaret Drain, '76,**  
vice president  
of national  
programming,  
WGBH

[Pbs.org](http://Pbs.org) [Drain photo],  
[dld-conference.com](http://dld-conference.com).

[Mossberg photo]



**Walt Mossberg, '70,**  
Personal technology columnist,  
The Wall Street Journal



**Dele Olojede, '88,**  
executive chairman,  
Timbuktu Media

[Pulitzer.org](http://Pulitzer.org) [Olojede photo];  
[jasna.org](http://jasna.org) [Turan photo]



**Kenneth Turan, '68,**  
film critic for the  
Los Angeles Times  
and NPR "Morning Edition."

More Alumni Weekend news on page 3

## Obama showed courage for refusing to dump his mentor



Call his March 18 speech the second Gettysburg address. You'll want to remember where you were when you heard the senator's words. It was a speech for the ages.

I admired his courage. U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., refused to take the easy way out and throw the Rev. Jeremiah Wright away in order to pacify a large segment of white voters. Refusing to cave could cost Obama his shot at president. Yet selling out so cheap would not be worth it.

I'm recalling what a friend, a foot soldier from the civil rights movement, once said: Some principles are non-negotiable. The non-negotiable act would have been Obama trashing a mentor and friend in order to get ahead. Would the cost have been worth it?

### Wayne Dawkins/Commentary

Based on a Wall Street Journal-NBC News [poll](#) published March 27, Obama weathered criticisms about his former pastor. The senator did not lose ground to Democratic rival Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y. The polls say voters' negative impression of Clinton widened. Her exaggeration about being in a combat zone in the former Yugoslavia a dozen years ago wounded her. Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., sits in neutral until he knows who his Democratic opponent will be.

Many whites just learned that millions of respectable black folk maintained their sanity because of fiery – and yes inflammatory and off-color – rhetoric belching from the guts of preachers at [black churches](#). Most black folk are accustomed to over-the-top comments from theologians. They understand that the preachers are speaking in metaphors. People in the pews know they are not being asked to act literally on preachers' advice.

The white pundits who reacted hysterically to 6-year-old sound bites from Wright come off as dangerously out of touch. I don't expect a response, but I fired this missive to National Review online/Los Angeles Times columnist Jonah Goldberg after reading his instructions before the Obama speech that the senator must tell black clergy why rhetoric like Wright's is poisonous.

"You're trippin'" I told Goldberg.

Obama knows he had no business lecturing black ministers about their pulpit decorum.

Then [Richard Cohen](#) of the Washington Post, a reliably trenchant columnist, sounded either naïve or too burrowed inside the Washington Beltway [although he's now based in New York] to write credibly about Obama's judgment. Cohen believed Obama should have thrown Wright under the bus.

You don't have to agree with your friends. Wright is and elder, so he remembers Jim Crow segregation and in-your-face racism. He is also a U.S. Marine and a veteran, a tough guy who defended America, even when America was ambivalent about defending him at home. How dare anyone question Wright's patriotism, especially fair-weather Neo-con punks who talk tough, but are the first to run if our country asked them to fight.

Wright's political style is not Obama's style. Obama says he wants to bring all kinds of Americans together, but on March 18 he reminded these masses that he is a brotha. Obama was not going to toss

Continued on page 4



# Columbia J-School Alumni Weekend 2008

Return, reconnect, rediscover April 3-5 in NYC/Continued

7:30-9 p.m.

Alumni Awards Reception and Book Signing by Alumni Authors

Low Library Rotunda

Visit [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/weekend2008](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/weekend2008) for the list of authors

## Complete Alumni Weekend Schedule

### Thursday, April 3

5:30-6:45 p.m.

Happy Hour with faculty and staff

7 p.m.

2008 Hearst New Media Lecture, Brian Storm

### Friday, April 4

10 a.m.-noon

How to Develop a Book Proposal, Samuel G. Freedman

Noon-1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30-2:30 p.m.

The Case Study Method in Journalism School, Michael Shapiro

2-4 p.m.

Career Services Open House

2:30-3:30 p.m. [Concurrent sessions]

-- Covering Religion, Ari Goldman

-- Cultural Affairs Reporting and Writing, David Hajdu

3:30-4:30 p.m. [Concurrent sessions]

-- Figuring Out Blogs, Web 2.0 & Whatever's Next, Sreenath Sreevasan

-- Science Reporting, Jonathan Weiner

5 p.m.

Student-led Tours of Building [Meet in Journalism Lobby]

6:30-7:30, 7:30-9 p.m.

Awards ceremony, reception and book signing [see front page]

### Saturday, April 5

9:30-9:45 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Classes Reception with Dean Nicholas Lemann

10-11 a.m. [Concurrent sessions]

-- Ten New Tech things to try today; Become more skilled and efficient on the Web, Sreenath Sreevasan

-- Journalism and beyond: Joseph Seldner, '76, interviews graduates who have

used their journalism education to pursue other careers.

-- Investigative Reporting, Shelia Coronel

11-11:45 a.m. Class Photos: 1983, 1958, 1953, 1948, 1963, 1968,

1973, 1978, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003 [five-minute intervals]

Noon Alumni Luncheon, Keynote speaker **David Denby, '66**,

film critic and staff writer at The New Yorker

Continued on next page

Presentation of the Founder's Award to **Judith Crist**, '45  
Presentation of the Dean's Medal for Public Service to **Phil Hardberger**, '60  
Presentation of the Dean's Citation to **Howard Brown**, '48

2:30-5:30 p.m.                      2:30-3:30 p.m. [Concurrent sessions]  
'68 Class Meeting                -- Behind the Pulitzer Prize, Sig Gissler  
    -- Covering the Vietnam War, panel discussion by the Class of '63  
3:30-4:30 p.m. [Concurrent sessions]  
-- From 1968-2008: The Political Landscape and How the Intersection  
between Journalism and Politics Has Changed Over the Last 40 years, Todd Gitlin  
-- Is the Message Still the Medium? A look at Alternative Media, organized by a Reunion Class

6 p.m.-until: Class Socials **Addie Rimmer**, '78, and **Lisa Rhodes**, '88, are among 32 class reunion agents.

### **Dawkins/Continued**

Wright overboard any more than he would toss his white grandmother [Rush Limbaugh's claim to the contrary], who loved him yet made anti-black statements that made him cringe.

The numerous white voters who migrated to Obama and his messages of hope have to deal with the boundaries he has drawn. If these voters abandon Obama because they cannot accept his principled stand, the presidency is not worth his time. The Wall Street Journal-NBC poll results suggest many voters may not be scared off by a black candidate and refuse to be cowed by an racial character flaw alleged by pundits and adversaries like the gleeful [GOP strategist](#) Todd Harris who said Rev. Wright makes Minister Farrakhan look like "Hello Kitty."

Yet the fire was contained. Remarkable.

*Dawkins is editor of the Black Alumni Network newsletter [Columbia University journalism], and he is a member of the Trotter Group [www.trottergroup.org](http://www.trottergroup.org)*

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) Wayne J. Dawkins – **editor**, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, **contributing editors**  
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Career opportunities, page 3

**Network**

Newsletter / Our 28<sup>th</sup> year / May 2007<sup>8</sup> Vol. 28, No. 5

## Luther P. Jackson Jr. (1925-2008); Columbia J-school's 1<sup>st</sup> black prof.

LUTHER PORTER JACKSON Jr., a groundbreaking journalist and educator, died on April 22 of complications from Parkinson's disease at Calvary Hospital in Bronx, N.Y. He was 83.

A resident of Hartsdale, N.Y., Jackson was one of the first African-American journalists at the Newark, N.J. Evening News in the 1950s and later at the [Washington Post](#) where he worked until 1963.

After a stint at IBM in Armonk and a Russell Sage Fellowship at Rutgers University, Jackson moved on to the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism where he served as professor, mentor, confidant and friend to hundreds of young journalists until his retirement in 1992.

Jackson was the school's [first African-American professor](#) when joined the faculty in 1968.



Luther Jackson chats with 1987 J-school graduates Alison Moore and Caroline Clarke at the 1989 NABJ Convention in New York. Photo by Wayne Dawkins

Born in Chicago on March 7, 1925, he graduated from Virginia State University and attended Black Mountain College in North Carolina before graduating from Columbia J-School in 1951.

Jackson served as a U. S. Marine Corps Sergeant in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

A member of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity, he married Nettie Lee of Petersburg in 1952.

A community activist wherever he lived, Jackson followed closely in the footsteps of his parents: Luther Porter Jackson, head of the history department at Virginia State and Johnella Frazer Jackson, assistant professor of music at Virginia State and organist at the Gillfield Baptist Church of Petersburg. Both parents were [civil rights activists](#).

Continued on page 4

**INSIDE:** Back to school for media elites, page 2; tag, you're it at Unity '08, page 4

Plain ARIAL

## Back to school [or to church] for media elites?

NEW YORK – When it was time for questions at the “Covering Religion” lecture during the Spring Alumni meeting at Columbia J-school, I posed this question to facilitator Ari Goldman: “I’m from a faith group that produced at least [five U.S. presidents](#), yet the group is frequently demonized and caricatured by some in media.



Wayne Hawkins/Commentary

“My faith group is a ‘kissing cousin’ of the United Church of Christ, the denomination under fire regarding the Rev. Jeremiah Wright. Did the media elite demonstrate profound ignorance of liberal Christianity?” Goldman’s reply was “no,” big media were not ignorant or clueless in its general coverage of the Wright firestorm. I followed up because the reply from the J-school professor and New York Daily News religion columnist felt like a brush-off. Seemed to me, I said, that big shots in the press had never heard of liberation theology.

They might be shocked that Wright echoed the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s 1967 criticism of the way the United States handled the Vietnam War.

OK, said Goldman, I get what you’re asking. During and after that session, at least five alumni from different decades pulled me to side to confide that they understood what I was suggesting. They expressed their frustrations with bad press behavior when faith intersected with the coverage of politics or society’s daily rhythms.

It seems many experienced reporters need to be sent back to Melvin Mencher’s RW1 [basic Reporting & Writing] class. Professor Mencher required that students visit churches, synagogues and mosques, observe, and write about the ways people observe their faith in worship and beyond. In his presentation, Goldman stressed the importance of capturing “ritual moments” of faith groups to enhance storytelling. Today, is the press doing a good enough job capturing these ritual moments so reporters can provide context on how American religious leaders behave?

An endless loop on cable news channels showed Wright’s “God damn America” snippet. For his blip of rage the media elite framed Trinity UCC as a hateful cult that includes a Democratic presidential candidate in its membership. Did the media pack know Trinity was one of the UCCs notorious for its inclusiveness, not its alleged hatefulness?

In 2004, CBS and NBC rejected [UCC advertisements](#) because they announced that their congregations welcomed people was all ethnicities and also welcomed gay, lesbian and trans gendered worshippers. Too controversial, the networks said.

I recognized the rituals of the UCC because they are very similar to those of my denomination, the Unitarians and Universalists. That faith group includes John and John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Millard Fillmore and William Howard Taft [the only president who also served as a U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice]. Garrison Keillor of “A Prairie Home Companion” jokes [I think he’s joking] that UCC means “Unitarians Considering Christ.”

The UUs and UCCs speak a common language with three other faith groups, the Quakers, Reform Jews and Bahai’s. Could most members of the hyper-secularized media elite understand what we say or believe?

After watching the way they covered the Rev. Jeremiah Wright story, I’m wary. Send those journalists back to school, or better yet to churches, synagogues or mosques.

## Jobline

### and professional development

The Philadelphia Inquirer seeks a **multimedia producer** to assist in coordinating online visual coverage with editors, writers and photographers. The multimedia producer will assist the Director of Photography in managing the multimedia operation for The Inquirer. The multimedia producer will also shoot video and photos, assist photographers and reporters to produce audio, video and multimedia journalism, and update the Inquirer Web site [www.philly.com](http://www.philly.com) with the latest breaking news videos, audio and photo galleries. Requirements: Experience in broadcast production and audio, video and photo editing. Ability to prioritize and perform under tight deadline in a team environment. Possess excellent news judgment. Knowledge of multimedia software such as Photoshop CS, Adobe Flash, Final Cut Pro, and Sorenson Squeeze. Send a cover letter, resume with references and a multimedia portfolio to: Hai Do, director of photography, Philadelphia Inquirer, 400 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19130. ... WOFL/Orlando, Fla. seeks an anchor/reporter. Duties: Anchor newscasts as assigned. Do enterprise and report news stories. Write creatively, clearly, accurately and quickly. Provide live coverage of breaking events. Take initiative and be a leader in the newsroom. A minimum of three years experience working as an anchor in a medium or large market preferred. Good news judgment and knowledge of fair and accurate journalism practices. **Full announcement here:**

[www.myfoxorlando.com/myfox/pages/InsideFox/Detail?contentId=26592&version=97&locale=EN-US&layoutCode=TSTY&pagel=5.8.1](http://www.myfoxorlando.com/myfox/pages/InsideFox/Detail?contentId=26592&version=97&locale=EN-US&layoutCode=TSTY&pagel=5.8.1) ... Youth Radio, a Peabody Award-winning production company and youth organization based in Oakland, Calif., seeks an energetic and talented **bureau chief** for the Los Angeles office who will oversee production and staffing. This position is a management role, requiring leadership of a team of staff dedicated to production, training, and college bound support. Candidates should have an established track record working on national productions for public radio and the ability to work with diverse youth. This position is based out of National Public Radio's Los Angeles offices in Culver City. Send resume to Youth Radio, Attn: Rebecca Martin, 1701 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612.

**HURRY, deadline is Thursday, May 1.** McCormick Tribune New Media Women Entrepreneurs will fund three women-led start-ups that will generate fresh news and information ideas and model a spirit of journalistic entrepreneurship. Winners will be given \$10,000 to launch their ideas and blog about the process over the next year. Visit [www.newmediawomen.org/site/proposal\\_guidelines/](http://www.newmediawomen.org/site/proposal_guidelines/)

The National Conference of Editorial Writers annually grants a **Barry Bingham Sr. Fellowship** — actually an award — “in recognition of an educator’s outstanding efforts to encourage minority students in the field of journalism.” The educator should be at the college level. Nominations, which are now being accepted for the 2008 award, should consist of a statement about why you believe your nominee is deserving. The final selection will be made by the NCEW Foundation board and will be announced in time for the Sept. 17-20 NCEW convention in Little Rock, Ark., when the presentation will be made. Since 2000, an honorarium of \$1,000 has been awarded the recipient, to be used to “further work in progress or begin a new project.” E-mail nominations to Richard Prince, NCEW Diversity Committee chair, [richardprince@hotmail.com](mailto:richardprince@hotmail.com). The **deadline is May 15**. ... Reel Sisters of the Diaspora Film Festival and Lecture Series is **seeking films** directed, written or produced by women of color. On Sept. 26-28, Reel Sisters will present “Hue Women & Cinema Blues: Exploring the Impact of Colorism in America.” The application is available at [www.reelsisters.org](http://www.reelsisters.org). Filmmakers will be able to apply on [www.withoutabox.com](http://www.withoutabox.com). Filmmakers may submit any length or style of film in the following categories: shorts, narratives, documentaries, animation, works-in-progress. The **submission deadline is June 6**. For information call Pittershawn Palmer at 347-534-3304 or e-mail [coordinator@reelsisters.org](mailto:coordinator@reelsisters.org).

## People

Rhoda McKinney Jones, '86, is communications director of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. [www.sdpconference.info/](http://www.sdpconference.info/) The spring alumni meeting at Columbia April 4-5 was a great opportunity to update the contact list. Millie Cherfils, '98, is coordinator of Young Reader Programmes for the World Association of Newspapers in Paris. Also spotted were Karen G. Houston, '73, Michelle Phipps-Evans, '00, Donnette Dunbar, '88, and Michael Oneal, '88. And there was a great show of familiar faces.

## Luther P. Jackson Jr. (1925-2008)/Continued

A life member of the NAACP and a leader in the New York chapter of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Jackson also researched and wrote about historical black towns in the United States including Boley, Okla. and Mound Bayou, Miss. He also shared with everyone his passions for education, history, community service, social justice, integrity and jazz, especially Duke Ellington.

Jackson is survived by his wife Nettie, son Luther III, grandsons Alexander Lee and Martin Lee of San Jose, Calif.; brothers Edward of Passaic, N.J. and John Tevis of New York City. His parents, sister Laura Frances and son, Lee Frazer predeceased him.

The funeral service was at Lee's Funeral Home, 160 Fisher Ave., White Plains, N.Y. on April 26. A graveside service was at the Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg, Va.

## UNITY 2008 Chicago Update July 23-27

The early bird deadline has passed and now June 13 is the pre-registration deadline for the record gathering of journalists of color. Register before the deadline and assist the financial health of your association.

Registration proceeds will be split proportionally among NABJ, NAHJ, AAJA and NAJA. After June 13, funds will go to the Unity Journalists of Color national office in the Washington, D.C. area. The first 3,000 Unity '08 registrants will receive two luggage tags. Networking can begin at the airport when you spot fellow attendees.

**BUILD YOUR OWN SCHEDULE.** A personal itinerary feature allows participants to pick and chose programs and add events to their schedule. Visit [www.2008unity.org/happening.cfm](http://www.2008unity.org/happening.cfm)

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism will hold a reception at Unity '08.

Also, the Black Alumni Network will hold its traditional Saturday morning breakfast.

A few people have already asked about attending.

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## Black Music Month: Mileposts recall 50 years of bop, blues and beats

I was sitting on a Hampton Roads Transit bus in March near a 60-ish black woman. She was dressed for service industry work. The woman wore headphones so I couldn't hear her music. What I did hear was her singing a classic R&B song, OUT LOUD.

She accented the song with grunts and other sound effects. This a cappella voice was average, neither very good, nor comically bad. The woman's earnest, uninhibited joy was above average.



Music has that effect on people, right? They hear songs that can take them to places where they felt love, sadness, joy, anger or steely resolve. Music is a soundtrack for many people's lives. With June designated as [Black Music Month](#), several Columbia University journalism alumni have taken time to recall music during milestone years. They looked at the last 50 years of music in five-year intervals. The songs or tunes they chose did not have to be chartbusters or award winners. The music needed to speak to the writer

and define what was going on in America or their lives when they heard the sounds on the radio, record player, or MP3.



Finally, and before the contributors tell about their memorable songs, it's nice to see proof that good music and musicians from the past can circle back and give listeners – young and mature – something fresh. Several people struggled to guess that vocalist on the second track of the 2008 Grammy Recording of the Year "River: The Joni Letters," a CD of Joni Mitchell's music by pianist and leader [Herbie Hancock](#).

OK, that vocalist was Tina Turner. Other singers on the CD include Norah Jones, and, Mitchell. Hancock and his combo, three-fifths of the '60s Miles Davis quintet [saxophonist Wayne Shorter and bassist Ron Carter], did twisted arrangements of Mitchell's "Both Sides Now," plus "Nefertiti," the Shorter classic performed by the Davis quintet.

Come travel with us, and please let us know about music that moved you during one of these milestone years. Send a message to [wdawkins4bj@aol.com](mailto:wdawkins4bj@aol.com) -- Wayne Dawkins, '80

IMAGES: Vinyl record, synthopia.com. Herbie Hancock, newsday.com

### Keep the scholar tradition going – use match gift benefit to endow Phyl Garland fund



On Journalism Day at Columbia J-school May 20, Lylah Holmes [photo] essentially gave a pep talk to about 60 scholarship recipients and their sponsors at a pre-awards program breakfast. Holmes, who graduated the next day, was the third BA Network/Phyllis T. Garland scholar, beneficiary of \$5,000 to cover her education. Holmes' Masters project was a documentary of presidential candidate Barack Obama's New York and New Hampshire campaign.

Continued on page 2

## 1958: Iconic, enigmatic Miles Davis

One of my fondest memories of 1958 was seeing Miles Davis' face on the cover of his "Round Midnight" album and then trying to listen to it. That's a daunting task for an 11-year-old but one nonetheless that I tried to accomplish. The record was my mother's. I was haunted by the look of Miles' face on the cover with his sunglasses on, hair freshly processed and the trumpet covering part of his face.



And since I had never looked too closely at the faces of anyone, and not white people whom I would soon encounter when my family moved out of our little safe and confined all-black enclave, Miles' face presented more than something enigmatic.

It was a happy time; Congressman-to-be Kweisi Mfume lived two doors away from us. The house next door had caught on fire one night. I remember being carried down the steps to safety in someone's arms.

And my aunt, one of the fine Christian women who helped raise my mother, continued to sit in our first floor window and talk with what seemed every person who walked by. She would later be committed once again to Maryland's Crownsville State hospital for the Insane. I remember the ride to take her there and us getting into an accident. I didn't know what all of the furor was about, then, because looking back today I had Miles Davis in my head and the melody and chords of "Round Midnight" floating through my brain.

Years later, all of these thoughts would come back to me when my RW I professor who signed his name at the end of our critiques simply LPJ, [Luther Porter Jackson] gave it to me in postcard form. By the time this happened I knew the music well, and had hung out with at least one or two of the musicians in the picture and knew Miles personally.

I met Miles Davis one night when I was summoned to deliver some food to his 77th Street townhouse on the Upper West Side. I had met some of the other musicians when they were on the road or in clubs in New York where I went to see them and always hung around later after their gigs than I should.

Hanging out was how I met the brilliant saxophonist Jackie McLean, who took me home with him when I had nowhere to go after a gig at the now-defunct Five Spot in the East Village.

While an Esquire photograph that included Gerry Mulligan, Art Blakey, Thelonious Monk, Lester Young and Oscar Pettiford was special, the cover shot of Miles in 1958 and the image that would come next, Miles on the cover of the "Kind of Blue" album with tie and shirt on, remain iconic images in this writer's life.

— Kip Branch, '79

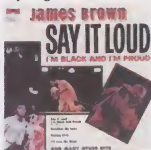
**Use matching gift benefit to endow Garland scholarships/**Continued from page 1 [See "Garland scholar shines during presidential campaign coverage," BA Network, February]. Holmes joins Sabrina Ford, '07 and Dani McLain, '06, as BA Network scholars. The push is on to raise the remaining funds to reach \$100,000 in order to create an endowed scholarship. SO FAR, \$68,595 in cash and pledges has been raised. Here is a powerful incentive to close the deal: An anonymous donor offered this challenge — individuals' gifts will be matched one-to-one up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year for three years. That means a \$50 gift to Garland fund doubles to \$100. Act fast. Send gifts, payable to Columbia University, and note Phyllis T. Garland Scholarship in the lower left of the check, to Columbia University GSJ, 2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027, Attention: Jodi Lipper or Sharon M. Fox..

## 1968: James Brown's 'Say it loud' ordered my steps

Among others by James Brown, "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud," is the song that, to borrow from church folk, "ordered my steps" and my actions.

*Some say we got a lot of manners, some say a lot of nerve,  
I say we won't quit moving til we get what we deserve,* Brown sang.

Indeed we were a mannerly generation, one driven by events in America that were way, way beyond anything we could either fathom or control. For those who lived in urban areas just getting by was difficult. For my generation – including those who by now managed to make it to the august halls of Columbia J-School – James Brown's line encapsulated all that was happening in 1968 and portended what was to come for the rest of the decade.



I was a student at a historically black college in an inner city in 1968, and so while Brown's song was in my consciousness, it resonated even louder for me in 1968 when I watched the fires and destruction of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. begin following the April 4 assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

It was an indescribable day and night, actually a series of days that was marked by images that are easy to remember: The fires and the heat, the angry and bewildered looks on the faces of white folks and the gleam of the bayonets on the end of the guns that the National Guardsmen carried with resolve to put down the violence in my ghetto. It seemed not only like America was coming to an end, but so were my dreams of becoming educated.

Not only did "Say It Loud" resonate loudly with me, so did all of James Brown's music. It echoed the walk and the talk of the era and bravado of those of us in the inner city. Hearing Brown sing, say, "Make It funky" was somehow my defiant song in the wake of King's murder. Brown's "Papa Don't Take No Mess" screamed at us.

In his piece in The New York Times of Jan. 1, Bob Herbert sums up how a lot of us felt in the eighth paragraph of his piece "Still Reeling After All These Years."  
"One of the astonishing things about 1968," Herbert writes "was how quickly each shocking, consciousness-altering event succeeded the last, leaving no time for people to reorient themselves. The mind-boggling occurrences seemed to come out of nowhere, like the Viet Cong who set off a depth charge beneath the Johnson presidency with the Tet offensive at the end of January."

The funk and groove of James Brown's music has proven itself to be one of the most important and iconic things that came out of the 1960s. Pop Brown's Greatest Hits CD into your player and see how long you can sit still. Better still, see how quickly your mind takes you back to those times when we were shaping the country we live in today and really didn't know how much.

James Brown told us in 1968: *We demand a chance to do things for ourselves,  
We're tired of beating our heads against the wall and working for someone else.*

Say It Loud. — Kip Branch, '79

IMAGE: Solcomhouse.com

### Old-school values + post-modern tools = quality journalism, says prof.

Sig Gissler, a Columbia J-school professor, urged professionals to practice "tra-digital journalism," a merger of the craft's best core values with new and emerging technology. Buzzword heard on May 20

## 1978: LTD and Jeffrey Osborne's post-soul groove

Love, Togetherness, Devotion – LTD. What's not to like about those three?

The bumpin' soundtrack in my head was "[Back in Love Again](#)" with LTD's lead singer Jeffrey Osborne in the groove. "Back in Love" was a true post-soul hit. There was the catchy call and response from the women backup singers ("I'm back, I'm back ... in love again. He's back ... back in love"). There were tight choruses from the horn section. The backups, horns and rhythm section were the tasty side orders to the meat – Osborne's mahogany-smooth baritone.

That year, the USA was in a malaise. President Jimmy Carter was under siege. Inflation was eating consumers alive. Americans were stunned that Arab nations now had us under their oil barrel. Esquire, my men's magazine did a cover story, "Why blacks aren't scary anymore." I was a recent college graduate working at Trans Urban News Service. The startup operation was grant funded. That summer I covered the choking death by police of black businessman Arthur Miller in Crown Heights. Musically, many people just wanted to escape temporarily from their woes to a good groove at the club.

The other memorable '78 song in my soundtrack was Roy Ayers' "The Runaway." Again, like Osborne and LTD, there was a catchy give and take between the lead and backups. This time, the backups carried the song. And "Runaway" had a funky, organic sound, unlike the polished disco tunes flooding the airwaves. I liked my music as unprocessed as the brown rice I'd taken to scooping out of the bulk bin at the food co-op.

– Wayne Dawkins, '80

## 1988: Stevie's scold and E,W&F's system of survival

By that year, the Ronald Reagan administration carried the worn-out-welcome stench of three-day-old fish or houseguests. The Iran-Contra arms traded for hostages scandal, plus the coddling of apartheid South Africa tainted Reagan, who seemed Teflon-proof in his first term and a half.

My favorite two pop artists tapped into the late-term crisis of confidence.

Stevie Wonder's LP "[Characters](#)," released at the end of '87, included "Skeletons," a sardonic commentary on the lies the administration were telling the American people. In searching for the recording online, a critic said that "Characters" arguably was Wonder's most underrated LP. It included the spiritual "You Will Know," plus tunes "Dark N' Lovely" and "One of a Kind."

Months shy of my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Wonder's "Talking Book" in 1973 was my first LP purchase. A close second was [Earth, Wind & Fire's](#) "Head to the Sky." In 1988, the latter's new recording, "Touch the World," [released in mid-'87] was my soundtrack. EW&F's dig at the sorry political climate was "System of Survival." Lead Maurice White:

*A plastic face on satellite TV ...  
says life is full of give and take ...  
he's taking as I'm giving ...  
so I dance, it's my system of survival... goes part of the song.*

EW&F not only railed against the government, but the drugs and despair that ravaged urban areas. The year 1988 was saturated with news about the crack epidemic and drive-by shootings. Yes, title song "Touch the World" is preachy and manipulative – it has the feel of a movie soundtrack – but I loved the soaring choruses and the battle hymn-like call to action anyway. And from a check of online sites, the tune is a popular ring tone.

– Wayne Dawkins, '80

## 1983: What a feeling of change, shifting under dancing feet

Prince had everyone partying like it was "1999." President Ronald Reagan branded the Soviet Union an "evil empire" and launched the "Star Wars" defense initiative. 1983 was a year fault lines shifted as a new world order previewed its debut. Leading the way, musically, by walking backwards was the emerging King of Pop — Michael Jackson.

The song that tilted the axis was Jackson's "Billie Jean" from the "Thriller" album, his second solo work produced with legendary jazz artist Quincy Jones for Epic Records. Named "Album of the Year" at the 25th Grammy Awards in February, the Jackson and Jones duo were "Producers of the Year." Jackson won a record eight Grammys for the album, title song and tracks "Beat It" and "Billie Jean."

In early March, the "Billie Jean" video, resplendent with Jackson's signature "moonwalk" choreography, blasted the color barrier of the MTV video rotation as the first video performed by an African-American artist to appear on the 2-year-old cable network. Fifteen days later, Jackson performed the non-Motown label chart-topper for a live taping of "Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever."



1983 was a year for letting go. On May 16, NBC broadcast "Motown 25." Produced by Suzanne de Passe, the edited program only glimpsed the bittersweet legacy of the Motown Records dynasty. The years of artist rivalry, breakups and battles for creative freedom peeked through performances by original Motown artists present. Jackson's out-of-this-world performance of "Billie Jean" cemented his independence from his siblings, the Jackson 5. The Temptations and the Four Tops played a gentleman's game of musical dozens, each group matching hit after hit of rhythm and blues gold. When Supremes Diana Ross and Mary Wilson hit the stage, the battle of the "diva" was on. And, Marvin Gaye once again

claimed his creative genius with a rousing performance of the 1971 social ballad "What's Goin' On." It was his last for former mentor and Motown founder Berry Gordy. IMAGE: msnbc.com

Accolades followed Gaye all year. In March, his rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the NBA All-Star game remains one of the most soulful ever. His swan song comeback, "Sexual Healing" released by Columbia Records in January won him his first of two Grammys for "Best Male Rhythm & Blues Vocal Performance" and "Best Instrumental Recording." Gaye was shot dead by his father the following year.

1983 was a year for crossing over. The "Best Rhythm and Blues Instrumental Performance" Grammy went to "Rockit" by Herbie Hancock from the album "Future Shock." Hancock was chided for diverting from traditional, acoustic jazz style composition by using the synthesizer and turntable "scratching." The technique foreshadowed "sampling" — a staple in the hip-hop/rap genre just years ahead; it demonstrated a repurposing of industry technology as well, as the compact disc, released in 1982, encroached upon vinyl record sales.

1983 was a year for changing of the guard. Breaking the sound barrier were Challenger astronauts Sally Ride and Guion S. Bluford, the first woman and the first African-American male, respectively, to travel to outer space. And, "Karma Chameleon" landed the ethnically diverse band Culture Club and its androgynous lead singer Boy George a "Best New Artist" Grammy. The same year, President Reagan signed the bill authorizing a national holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Jesse Jackson announced his 1984 candidacy for president the next day.

The land of the beautiful also crowned Vanessa Williams its first black Miss America that year. Many a sister belted along with Irene Cara — winner of the Grammy's "Best Pop Vocal Performance, Female" — the title song from the movie "Flashdance." Like the heroine, a construction worker relentlessly pursuing her American dream, "What a Feelin'," we finally got to dance. — Kissette Bundy, '87

## 1973: Look what you done for me

Trumpeter Miles Davis once told me that the singer Al Green was the only man he would marry. Knowing Miles, it didn't come across as some unthought-of-about errant comment but one about Green's brilliance as a singer, his soulful delivery of every song that he sings and, looking back today, his staying power.



For more than 30 years Al Green's unmistakable voice has been the one that has held me and a lot of other folk together in the wake of the civil rights movement, deaths, love affairs and other kinds of tragedies. During the 1970s there was no where you could go and not hear Al Green; his music blared in the streets and from windows, it was all over on the radio and today when I hear it in the supermarket I find myself chuckling and watching other folks who are tuned in like I am.

"Let's Stay Together,"

"Look What You Done for Me,"

"I'm Still in Love with You."

Whew. There is no voice, no timbre that can match what Green delivers in his down home funky way. Throughout the decade Al Green created a one-way kind of personal soul that did everything. Even before Green became really famous he'd had the distinction of having steaming hot grits thrown on him by a distraught girlfriend in 1974. But that didn't stop the soulful crooner whose voice is as strong and distinct today as it was 30 years ago when he sang his anthem "Let's Stay Together."

Green's put a lot of, not just a little love in the hearts of music fans around the world. Think about him when you're sitting in church and hear the choir crank up and sing "Take Me to The River."

— **Kip Branch**, '79

IMAGE: zero.co.nz

## 1993: Tag Team's rowdy touch

The Fightin' Phillies were stars that year. They won the National League pennant. It took a late-inning home run to deny them the World Series crown. Those Phillies were a rowdy bunch. Their squeaky-clean pitching ace Curt Schilling famously said since the rival Atlanta Braves were called "America's team" because of their trio of pretty-boy pitchers and national exposure on super station TBS. So, his scruffy teammates must be "America's Most Wanted" on FOX.

The rowdy Phillies deserved a theme song.

It was "Whoomp!" [There it is] by [Tag Team](#).

That year Bob Herbert became the first black op-ed columnist in the history of the New York Times. One of his pieces was an [explanation](#) of the spirited, and yes, bawdy "Whoomp!" [There it is]. Another 1993 highlight was [Toni Braxton](#) belting out "Love Shoulda Brought You Home," one of the hits in the romantic comedy "[Boomerang](#)." — **Wayne Dawkins**, '80

## People

**Evelyn C. White**, '85, [profiled](#) Canadian Gov. Gen. [Michelle Jean](#) in the Canadian Immigrant. Jean is a refugee who fled Haiti and the Duvalier regime. As governor general, White reported, Jean serves by mandate of Queen Elizabeth II as Canada's cultural ambassador to the world. ... Bravo to [Marilyn Milloy](#), '82, who edited "1968: The year that rocked our world," for the May & June AARP The Magazine. [www.aarpmagazine.org](#)



## 1998: Unfamiliar beat to different songs

On the biggest party night, this had to be sign of a widening generation gap at NABJ: Six of us 40-somethings moved futilely from ballroom to ballroom Saturday looking for those familiar rhythmic beats. The 20-something hip hop crowd was playing something different. It seemed arrhythmic to us, three women, three men. The “kids” were jumping up and down like pogo sticks.

Oh dear, we’re getting old. At least the young adults thought so.

The DJ did play a James Brown and Motown song at the start of the party, then expected the grownups to scam so the young people could have their party after 11 p.m. Oh well.

Here were a few Billboard No.1 R&B hits of that year: “Nice and Slow,” [Usher](#); “The Boy is Mine,” Brandy and Monica, and “Let’s Ride,” Montell Jordan, featuring Master P and Silkk the Shocker. I would have recognized those artists on that surreal night. The “kids” apparently were playing underground party music.

— Wayne Dawkins, '80

## 2003: Shockin' Y'all? Seeing red over Iraq

This was the year of the Bush administration pre-emptive Iraq invasion and failure to find the weapons of mass destruction that was the reason for going to war.

Ten days before the U.S. invasion, the [Dixie Chicks](#) told a British audience that because of his policies, they were ashamed that Bush was a fellow Texan. In the jingoistic, post 9-11 climate, angry country music fans broke Dixie Chicks' CDs like eggs and banished them from FM radio.

[Toby Keith](#) became a standard bearer of red state-Fox News-informed war mongering with “Shockin' Y'All.” Yet there was protest music urging an end to the violence, whether it was abroad, or at home. [Lenny Kravitz](#) recorded “We Want Peace,” a shout-out that the Iraq war was a sham.

At home, [Bruce Springsteen](#) recorded “American Skin,” which included “41 Bullets,” a tribute to Amadou Diallo, the unarmed African immigrant who was slaughtered by New York Police. Mayor Rudy Giuliani and cop unions were furious that a white rocker from Jersey went there regarding Amadou, but Springsteen was endearing to a cross section of music lovers because his art had grit, passion, and a conscious. What did the authorities expect?

In 2003, Hip Hop was an established player on the music scene. The genre was the second-highest producer of recorded music and videos with a 13-percent percent share of market, compared to No. 1, Rock [25 percent], No. 3, R&B [11 percent] and No. 4, Country [10 percent].

Did any major hip-hop artist offer a meaningful Iraq war comment, or were most artists too busy counting their money? I went searching for evidence, but came up empty.

If I looked in the wrong places, someone put me on the right path. Please. — Wayne Dawkins, '80

## Tick, tick, tick: Pre-registration deadline for Unity 2008 is this month



June 27 is the cutoff date for hotel registrations, and Chicago hotels are filling up fast. But remember, in order to reserve a hotel room, attendees must register for the convention. That deadline is June 13.

Visit [www.2008unity.org](http://www.2008unity.org) and click the registration tab.

Hurry, because you don't want to be late.

## 1963: Martin – and Maria – chased dreams

Youngbloods [and even some who are graying] cannot imagine the racial tension of 1963. It was the year when Gov. George Wallace defiantly proclaimed “segregation forever,” when Medgar Evers was murdered, when Sheriff Bull Connor turned his dogs on men, women and children, and when four black girls were killed in a church bombing in Birmingham, Ala.



As a child of 7, those national news events went on largely above my head. But I well understood racial tension. I remember seeing a white teenager beat a black teenager on the street where I lived in New York City for looking at a white girl. And I remember, later that day, watching from my apartment window as black and white teenagers clashed with sticks and baseball bats in the middle of Junction Boulevard, the dividing line between the black and white neighborhoods.

But I also remember the seeds of racial healing being planted. That was also the year Rev. Martin Luther King gave his “I have a dream speech.” My mother attended the March on Washington. And I vividly remember the film “West Side Story.” The soundtrack from that movie was the top-selling album of 1963.

IMAGE: allposters.com

The film is about rival gangs in New York City, one white and the other Puerto Rican [though one wonders whether Puerto Ricans were used as a metaphor for all minorities. In that era, a plot involving warring black and white gangs would have been far too explosive]. In the end, Maria, the Puerto Rican woman who has fallen in love with a white guy, is able to shame the gangs into making peace after her love is murdered. For a moment, she gets both sides to see the madness of racism. To this day, I cannot watch that scene without crying. To some extent we are still chasing her dream – and MLK’s dream, too. – Dan Holly, ’85

The Black Alumni Network of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism was founded in May 1980 and since July the group has published a monthly newsletter. The BA Newsletter’s mission is to keep people connected. We publish job changes and moves, news about books and films published or produced by alumni, and family milestones. And of course we keep alumni connected to news from the Columbia GSJ. Log on to our Web site at [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) or see our link on the home page of [www.blackjournalist.com](http://www.blackjournalist.com) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, contributing editors E-mail tips, comments, suggestions to [wdawk69643@aol.com](mailto:wdawk69643@aol.com) Or call 800-268-4338

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## Unity '08 Journalists of color in Chicago

Attendance could be stunted because of economic stress in media

### UNITY



As of June 30, about 4,300 black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American journalists – including 2,000 from NABJ – were pre-registered for the fourth Unity Journalists of Color convention July 23-27 in Chicago. [Pre-registration numbers were down](#) compared to the 5,600 who were registered at the same time for the last gathering in 2004.

Deep cuts inside mainstream media companies because of economic stress could mute projections that 10,000 people would attend the largest meeting of journalists of color.

Organizers will be hard pressed to match 2004 attendance in Washington, D.C. which was nearly 8,200. Visit [www.unityjournalists.org](http://www.unityjournalists.org) for late-breaking updates.

One change was the decision by CNN to broadcast a U.S. presidential [candidates forum](#) with Senators John McCain, R-Ariz., and Barack Obama, D-Ill., in prime time. The scheduled NABJ Hall of Fame banquet was moved to an afternoon to accommodate the special event

Columbia University J-school will hold its [reception](#) Thursday, July 24 from 5-7 p.m. ... The Saturday, 8 a.m. Black Alumni Network breakfast is a convention tradition. The venue is to be announced shortly. RSVP by sending e-mail to [wdawkins4bj@aol.com](mailto:wdawkins4bj@aol.com) so organizers can get a head count.

## K. Maurice Jones, 1958-2008, Wry, beloved writer

Kenneth Maurice Jones, a 1981 Columbia University journalism graduate and writer for numerous magazines, died of congestive heart failure June 13 in his hometown Detroit, said the family. Jones was 50.



After graduation from Columbia, Jones was a reporter with the Rochester, N.Y. Times-Union, then he returned to New York City and wrote for Time Inc. publications, for Black Enterprise, and later for the startup Ebony Man and other magazines.

Jones' most productive years were the 1980s through much of the 1990s. The last decade he acknowledged that his work was slowed because of frequent illness from – living with HIV and later AIDS.

Alumni fondly remembered Jones: "Kenneth's wonderful personality and wit has stayed with me for years," said Sheryl H. Tucker, '82. "In fact, to this day, my husband Roger can't hear Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' without smiling and asking about Kenneth. He only met him once, but never forgot the energetic and downright hilarious 'Thriller' dance number that Kenneth and Betty [Winston Baye, '80] did at a party."

Said Winston Baye, "I have many memories of many good times hanging out with Ken. I remember well an intense conversation we had about him being gay and then some years later him telling me that he'd contracted HIV/AIDS. Ken, on so many levels, was a kind and gentle man. I will miss just knowing that he was on the planet."

PHOTO: Undated from the 1980s

Continued on page 2

## People

Keith Rushing, '90, is a writer-editor for [Advancement Project](#), a D.C.-based non-profit organization that combines policy advocacy, litigation, grass-roots organizing and communications to achieve greater racial justice. AP is working in a number of states, said Rushing, to expand access to the vote for people of color, advocating for the restoration of public housing in New Orleans and trying to end zero-tolerance policies in public schools, among other issues. Rushing will be writing blogs on racial justice issues twice a week in addition to writing and editing reports. "It's satisfying work about issues I care about without the bottom-line demands of the news biz," he said. Rushing left the North County Times of San Diego in late September. Over 15 years he also worked at the Williamsport Sun-Gazette in Pennsylvania, the Connecticut Post and the Daily Press in Virginia.



Cheryl Devall, '82, said her public radio station, KPCC-FM, won five LA Press Club awards last month, including three in which she had a direct hand as editor: "Best investigative radio story, about a racially motivated shooting; best radio entertainment story, on the incoming LA Philharmonic conductor and – wow! – best breaking news coverage for October's wildfires," Devall wrote in an e-mail. "We placed second in another eight categories. While I recognize that this happened largely because other radio stations have abandoned news coverage, I also realize that this means something – people at the TV stations were congratulating us, saying they listen to what we do." Devall is a senior news editor at the station.

Aqua Lezli Hope, '77, [Lezli H. White] received a pleasant surprise recently. She is included in the book "Night and Day: The Double Lives of Artists in America." [Chapter 16](#), "The Truest Part of Oneself," profiles Aqua during her time as a corporate public relations manager who wrote poetry and made art.

PIC?  
←

### K. Maurice Jones/ Continued from front page

Frank Dexter Brown, '81, said "For me, Ken Jones was one of the most memorable members of our class. He was one of the most progressive among us and one of the most supportive of the needs of others. Throughout his journalistic career, he was a solid reporter and writer, who worked with courage, heart and consciousness. His strength especially showed as he dealt with long-term illness.

"While Brother Ken will be missed, his warrior spirit will remain alive in all of us who were lucky enough to know him and experience his deeply rooted caring for others."

### Editor's note: BA Newsletter's 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary

When our newsletter began publishing in July 1980, it was produced on a manual typewriter, then photocopied and mailed to two dozen classmates who bonded during school and vowed to keep in touch. Back then, mainframe computers were just becoming standard in newsrooms, PCs were still five years away, and the Internet was a national security – not a consumer – tool.

Oh, and postage was 15 cents for the first ounce. My, times have changed.

We've changed too. The newsletter grew its circulation. About 500 are circulated monthly, mostly to subscriber's and friend's inboxes, and a minority still prefers to get the publication via the U.S. Postal

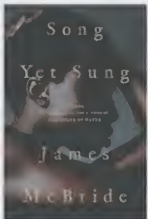
Continued on page 4

## BOOK REVIEW

**Song Yet Sung**

James McBride, Riverhead Books, 2008, \$25.95, ISBN 978-1-59448-972-3

The Eastern Shore of Maryland is an arm of land that extends away from the mainland United States and holds the Chesapeake Bay in its elbow. This strip was worked largely by "watermen," the regional word for fishermen who dredged oysters from the bay.



In 1850, a decade before the Civil War, the Eastern Shore was a complex patchwork of watermen, slaveholders on small farms, slave catchers and enslaved blacks who made choices to flee to the North or stay put because of family commitments. **James McBride**, '80, [photo below] takes readers inside this complex network in "Song Yet Sung," his second novel. McBride's first, "Miracle at St. Anna," is a forthcoming Spike Lee film.

Liz Spocott, a doe-eyed 19-year-old slave, is the central character. She leads a mass escape of 14 men and women from the farm of Patty Cannon. Pistol-packing Patty is furious and wants her human property back.

Liz is not a heroine to many local black folk. Is she a witch who dreams elaborately and can peek into the future, or simply a troublemaker? Multiple slaves on the run put local blacks' lives in peril.



McBride's novel explains "the code," subtle signals blacks used to punch runaways' tickets on the "freedom train" North. The Eastern Shore was the birthplace of Harriet Tubman, the "black Moses" who successfully sprung scores of blacks in dozens of trips. We now know that Tubman packed a "heater" and would not hesitate to fire her weapon if runaways had second thoughts that might doom the mission. "Song Yet Sung" confirms that Tubman was backed by a wide network of lookouts and safe house keepers.

Freedom was merely 80 miles away as one of the 27 chapter headings noted. Such proximity made the Eastern Shore an edgy place. Watermen did not care for slave catchers roaming their land, yet watermen enabled slavery even as they swore that they just wanted to be left alone to harvest oysters.

In addition to the mysterious Liz, another strange character is Woolman, the black man-beast living in the wilderness who is at times a savior, kidnapper and avenger.

"Song Yet Sung" effectively introduces readers to earthy and complex characters struggling to survive on multiple levels on the Eastern Shore and Chesapeake Bay region.

— Wayne Dawkins, '80

**Editor's note/** Continued from page 2

Service, which increased postage again last month to 42 cents.  
Thousands more readers can access editions via [www.jrn.columbia.edu](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu).

The good news is at age 28, BA Newsletter is brand, a network of industry leaders and creative people, and an association capable of doing more for the greater good.

In the spirit of Motown's Temptations, I ain't too proud to beg.  
BA N is self-supporting and we need all the help we can get.

THANK YOU to the seven people who gave \$233 in renewed or new subscriptions for the first half of 2008. Over decades, our costs have shifted from stamps, paper and printing to utility costs, be it Internet, phone lines and bank charges. When the renewal reminders go out, please answer the call.

BA N is a force in the campaign for endowing the Phyllis T. Garland Memorial Scholarship. As of May 27, \$68,595 in cash and pledges were raised in order to reach \$100,000 and permanently generate scholarships off the interest.

The nearly \$69k does not include this sweet gift: An anonymous donor who appreciated our effort put up \$7,500 in challenge funds to get us to the goal faster. So whatever you give in the 2008-2009 fiscal year will be matched and doubles. How many of you are going to give and close the deal on the Garland Scholarship?

A number of alumni want to get started on the next campaign: An endowed scholarship in honor of Luther P. Jackson Jr. [1925-2008], who died last April. Ready to rise to the challenge? — **Wayne Dawkins**, '80

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) Wayne J. Dawkins — **editor**, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, **contributing editors**  
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**Network**

Newsletter / Our 28<sup>th</sup> year / August 2008 / Vol. 28, No. 8

## Battered, yet unbowed at UNITY-'08 Chicago

Optimism and resolve is evident at 'buyout convention'



Mike Upton plays the sax on Michigan Avenue [Adam Sings in the Timber/The UNITY News]. Below, while waiting in line at the NBC booth, David Hall [right] turns to talk to a fellow journalist at the career fair inside the McCormick Place convention center [Michelle Le/The UNITY News]



## Optimism and resolve was evident at 'buyout' convention

"Buyout convention" was an alternate name for the fourth gathering of the associations of Black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American journalists. Weeks, even the night before the convention opening, colleagues announced in e-mails or cell phone calls that they collected their severances and left their buildings. When the four boards met two decades ago, they resolved to fight the power – and work with the media too – in order to expand racial diversity in newsrooms.

Today the media powers are in critical condition. Knight Ridder, the nation's second-largest newspaper company when the journalists of color partners last met in 2004, is gone. Iconic Tribune Company was limping. Scores of workers in Tribune cities like Los Angeles, Hartford, Conn., Orlando, Fla. and Newport News, Va., took voluntary buyouts or were involuntarily let go. Furthermore, Tribune, which was publicly owned during Unity 2004, was now privately owned by real estate developer Sam Zell.

In a year, 2,400 newspaper journalists were cut from newsrooms, reported the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and one of every eight journalists were newsies of color. Diversity numbers in broadcast news were disappointing too. In Chicago, UNITY leaders said that media companies must not abandon diversity especially during radical reorganization and shrinkage of the mainstream media.

July 23-27 was a week in which journalists – about 7,500 bought out, laid off or overworked members – discussed how save the craft they love. Yes there was big news to cover. On the traditional getaway Sunday, presumptive Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama addressed UNITY conventioners after returning from overseas meetings with world leaders. Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade was the first foreign head of state to address a UNITY convention. Veterans marveled at the passion and skill of scores of student journalists who covered convention and showed now signs that their career futures were bleak. Let's hope the young optimists are right. – Wayne Dawkins, '80

## Convention notebook

UNITY meeting of '88 recalled; bittersweet Maynard milestone

### Naples is on line one

At 8:30 Central Time on the opening day of the convention, I took an overseas cellular call from NABJ founder and seventh president DeWayne Wickham. Convention attendance was a little lighter this year because Wickham had about 50 NABJ members with him in Europe. They included co-founder John White, 11<sup>th</sup> president Arthur Fennell, Betty Winston Baye, '80, and Tonyaa Weathersbee. Wickham and Co. were overseas to make friends and raise money for his journalism institute at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro. Wickham called because many of us were looking for him.



Wednesday marked the first time all of the UNITY partner boards met at a convention. In 1988, Wickham was the host of the first summit of the four boards in Baltimore. With my Sharpie and a reporter's notebook, Wickham dictated what he

Wayne Dawkins/Dispatch recalled about the initial meeting and I typed up a report that was presented by Lloyd LaCuesta, AAJA president during the first UNITY convention in 1994.

Wickham's reflections: Crab diplomacy worked. The night before the summit meeting, the board members cracked crabs, ate and relaxed a bit. The next day approximately 50 board members and staff faced each other around a square table.

Continued on page 4

## BA Network socialize and strategize at annual breakfast

By Toni Randolph

The annual alumni breakfast at last month's Unity Conference in Chicago was peppered with discussions about layoffs in the industry and the presidential campaign of U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, along with the regular updates on fund raising and statistics about the incoming class. Fifteen Columbia J-School alumni and faculty met on July 26 at Shula's Steakhouse in the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Tower.



During the annual gathering there was a call for donations to the Phyllis T. Garland Memorial Scholarship fund. So far, alumni and friends have given \$67,000 to the fund. The goal is to raise \$100,000 to establish a permanently-endowed scholarship. "I want to encourage everyone to contribute whatever you can," Gayle Pollard Terry, '73, [photo] said. The money will go toward scholarships for black students.

Tuition, plus room and board for the J-school is at an all-time high. The Class of '09 will pay more than \$60,000 for the Master of Science program. That's five times higher than the tuition students in Pollard Terry's class paid.

The record-high tuition comes at a time when the industry is losing jobs in record numbers. Pollard Terry, who accepted a buyout offer from the Los Angeles Times last year, said the newspaper laid off 150 people in July and plans to lay off 150 more by the end of the year. Hundreds of jobs have been cut at newspapers across the country over the last year.

Still the number of students enrolling in the J-School continues to grow. The Class of '09 will have 280 students, according to June Cross, J-School associate professor. She said 7 percent are black, 7 percent are Latino and 10 percent are Asian.



Cross says she and Addie Rimmer, '78, [photo] are the only two full-time black faculty at the J-School. She says there's also a black part-time faculty member as well as a black adjunct professor. They'll soon be joined by Howard French from the New York Times, who will be the only full-time black male on the J-School faculty.

David Peterkin, '82, and Pollard Terry are among the two dozen members of the new J-School alumni board. Peterkin will now have an official role in keeping graduates linked to the school. But he said it was the Black Alumni Network newsletter, now in its 28<sup>th</sup> year of publication, that kept him linked for many years.

"It kept me connected with Columbia in a way that Columbia wasn't keeping me connected with Columbia. There were people I met through the newsletter. It's [The BAN Newsletter is] such a great institution we started," he said.

Wendell Edwards, '97, a reporter with KHOU-TV in Houston, attended the breakfast before picking up an NABJ award for his story "Chitling Test."

The breakfast roll call also includes Wayne Dawkins, '80; Akisa Omulepu, '07; Nneka Nwoso, '06; Cheryl Devall, '82; Barbara Gutierrez, '80; Olga Joseph, '92; Keith Rushing, '90; Martina Stewart, '07; Olivera Perkins, '87; and Angela Chatman, '77

*The writer is a 1988 Columbia University Journalism graduate and is based at Minnesota Public Radio.*

## Convention notebook/ Continued

The scene looked tense to some, but Wickham said the table was configured that way so no group would look too dominant in size. That did not help the Native American delegation since Mark Trahan was their lone representative.

To get to Baltimore, the leaders overcame skepticism from rank-and-file members who did not want the summit, and concerns from leaders about the venue for the first convention. For example, Native Americans were not thrilled about going to Atlanta because of the local Major League Baseball team name. The partners were able to work out differences and meet in '94 and again in '99 [Seattle] and '04 [Washington, D.C.], and now come to Chicago.

Here, a lot of convention buzz was should the UNITY partnership change?

A concern, especially from NABJ members, the oldest, largest and most independent constituency, was that UNITY Journalists of Color, Inc. emerged as a fifth organization and "overseer" as one member characterized it, of the four partners. There were concerns that UNITY Inc. was sapping resources from the partners. At the joint board meeting, several NAHJ and AAJA leaders expressed general satisfaction with the fifth association.

Sidmel Estes-Sumpter, NABJ's first woman president and a UNITY board member in '94, announced that she had the incorporation papers at her house and would be more than happy to give them to the home office in the D.C. area. Estes-Sumpter said UNITY was supposed to sunset or end after one, or at most two conventions. Founders had other ideas. Not only did William W. Sutton Jr. and Juan Gonzalez, the daddy-o's of UNITY, want the format to continue, they recommended some restructuring, and more frequent meetings on a two-year cycle.

Before mid-June, revenues from member registrations divided up based on the volume each association delivered. After mid-June, the revenues went to Unity Inc. and some of the remaining money would be parceled to the four partners. In June, NABJ conservatively projected 2,100 members would come and 1,950 pre-registered, said Treasurer Gregory Lee.

According to post-convention reports like Richard Prince's Journal-isms, NABJ's share was at least 2,100 of the 7,500 participants. NABJ attendance fell way short of the record attendance the last time the association came in town: 3,200 attendees for an association of 3,300 members. Current membership now exceeds 4,100.

### Columbia J-school reception

About 140 people attended the July 24 Columbia University Journalism School alumni reception at the Hyatt McCormick Place. J-school faculty and staff, prospective students, guests of alumni and guests of faculty and administrators were there too.

Larger-than-life Gannett recruiter Joe Grimm distributed his wry take on the status-marker ribbons many convention-goers attached to their badges. Most of those ribbons designated the wearer as an association board member, a scholarship donor or...well, you get the picture. Some folk sported boldly colored layers of two or three. Grimm's pale pink ribbon, embossed in the same gold typeface as the others, read simply: HIRE ME.

To my mind, it was the best souvenir of the convention. UNITY '08 could have felt like one long wake, but this was a reminder that we chose to laugh. Grimm by the way took a buyout from the Detroit Free Press. — Cheryl Devall, '82

Continued on page 6

## BOOK REVIEW

**Pig Candy: Taking My Father South, Taking My Father Home — A Memoir**

Lise Funderburg, Free Press, 2008, \$24, ISBN 978-1-4165-4766-2

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons of life is to live, forgive and be vulnerable to love, affirms **Lise Funderburg**, '91, in her memoir "Pig Candy."



As in her first book, "Black, White, Other," Funderburg massages the still tender epidermis of America's scar-worn issue with race, although more intimately.

The child of a white mother and black father raised in the Northeast, Funderburg chronicles the two-year period she travels again and again with her dying father back to his *home place* down South.

Like many of his generation, George Newton Funderburg is emotionally aloof and withholding about his past struggles and disappointments. He is a complicated man who navigated the second wave of the Great Migration fleeing a Jim Crow-infested, rural Georgia to family life and professional success in an integrated, urban Philadelphia.

He is an enigma of contrasts for his white-looking, youngest daughter who grew up in the 1960s. Since the age of 12, when he separated from the family, she has harbored feelings of fear and admiration of the "always working" dad whose "approving attention" remained elusive.

In 2004 when his prostate cancer returns after 15 years in remission, Funderburg gets a final chance to unravel the mystery of her father's determined request to return to the rooted-in-bigotry agrarian culture of his childhood.



Funderburg, [photo] her two elder sisters and the small-town extended family – both black and white – share in the increasing ritual of care her father requires as he deteriorates. Sandwiched between their juggling of everyday tasks, doctor visits and chemotherapy are celebrations of life featuring the fading Southern tradition of roasting a whole pig to a caramelized delicacy known as "pig candy."

This personal narrative is a bittersweet story of the undeniable love between parent and child and the American legacy shared by generations, among families and communities, separate and blended.

— Kissette Bundy, '87

## Convention notebook/Continued

### President Wade and \$20,000

President Abdoulaye Wade on July 25 was the first foreign head of state to address a UNITY convention and the second to address NABJ members [Michael Manley of Jamaica spoke at NABJ 1989 in New York].

Wade [pronounced Wahd], impressed NABJ President Ciara during her delegation's trip to West Africa.



Wade [third from left in suit] enters McCormick Place to give speech [Jarrod Henderson/The UNITY News]

tried to deflect an NABJ interviewer's question about alleged assaults on journalists. An unregistered opponent who managed to get into room stood and shouted "You're not speaking for my people." and someone in Wade's 40-member entourage slugged Souleymane Jules Diop of Canada, reported The UNITY News. Order was quickly restored.

His republic behaves democratically, not despotically, and the president was invited to speak about environment protection and food production. Some journalists however had questions about Senegal's attitude toward press freedom since there were reports of journalists being beaten by police and detained. What was anticipated as a feel-good speech by the leader of a model African nation at times was a battle of wills between opponents and supporters of Wade. American-style street protest between Senegalese rivals took place outside McCormick Place convention center just before Wade's speech. Inside the convention hall, the president

There was this disconnect: In two UNITY News accounts, readers could feel Ciara chaffing from suggestions that Wade should not have been invited to speak. Of course the Senegalese president deserved to be here. However the disconnect was it was a surprise that planners or the guest might be surprised by press freedom questions from American professionals and students.

Part of the dinner tab was picked up by the Senegalese.  
Will a fuzzy ethical decision cause indigestion?

Also number of NABJ members must be kicking themselves for not following the money better. Members knew about \$500 dinner fund-raiser tickets for a post-speech event with the president. Near the end of the convention, it was reported that the dinner was partially underwritten with \$20,000 from the Senegalese government. A former NABJ president and vice president that evening told me they were uncomfortable with the underwriting. Richard Prince's "Journal-isms" July 28, Gregory Lee sought guidance from the Poynter Institute and was told that dinner on the Senegalese government's dime fell into an ethically gray area. Hopefully the dinner arrangement won't leave a bad aftertaste.

Continued on page 7

LINK

Reported that



## Convention notebook/Continued

### Bittersweet MIJE 30

July 24 was a celebration and milestone, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education. At a fund raising breakfast, the 200-plus gathered included NABJ founders, top newspaper editors and broadcast managers, many middle management editors and producers, opinion writers, recruiters and journalism educators.

Many of the faces looked earnest or grim as they considered the future of media under economic siege. Dorothy B. Gilliam, '61, a Maynard board member, interviewed New York Times Publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr. In the tumultuous media world the publisher had this concern: "Can journalism educators deliver full diversity, journalistic talent that brings deep digital skills? Right now, it's heavily Asian."



Inside the converged UNITY News newsroom that produced daily print, online, radio and television reports. Forty two students and 38 professions representing the four associations participated. Visit [www.unitynews.org](http://www.unitynews.org) [Jarrad Henderson/The UNITY News]

I asked Sulzberger about Web traffic on the NYTimes.com site and comparative numbers to what was reported about the Washington Post. When editor Leonard Downie retired this summer after 17 years at the top, The Post reported that "dead tree" circulation plummeted by 200,000 daily, however Web traffic zoomed to 9.4 million visitors. Sulzberger answered "Whatever the Washington Post numbers were, the New York Times is two time that." The audience laughed, then Sulzberger got serious and laid out the challenge. The Times' newspaper readers spend 35 minutes a day with the hard copy, online, customers average 35 minutes per month. "We have to grow that number," said the publisher "and make our site stickier."

He also said that the future may be digital, however home-delivered papers has not declined. Presently 820,000 papers are home delivered nationally compared to 650,000 a few years ago, said Sulzberger and the average customer is in their 40s and new customers are getting younger. "If you have a subscription for two years or more," said the publisher, "we have you for life." End

## People

*J-School year?*

Kip Branch, '79, wrote an appreciation of J-school professor Luther P. Jackson [1925-2008] for the summer NABJ Journal. Branch fondly recalled the year Jackson spent with the growing North Carolina Central University Media-Journalism program. "Luther won all of them [students] over almost immediately with his easy going manner but more so because he let them know that they were important – that they were as important to him as they were as they were students at the J-school who came from very different backgrounds and schools and had different temperaments." Branch, 2005 NABJ Journalism Educator of the Year, is a professor at Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina.



Reginald Stuart '71, [photo] has been appointed to the board of the Student Press Law Center, a Washington D.C.-area non-profit whose mission is to advocate for free-press rights for high school and college journalists, reported Columbia Journalism School E-News. The law center also provides legal information and referral assistance at no charge to students and the educators who work with them. Stuart is a corporate recruiter for The McClatchy Company, one of the largest newspaper companies in the nation. He has worked throughout his career to support open records laws and free press rights.

Trevor Delaney '97, was appointed personal finance editor at the Associated Press in New York. Delaney was editorial director for personal finance at Black Enterprise magazine. [E-News]

Contact list update: During the UNITY convention, we connected with Regina Barboza, '84, Alexis Clark, '02, DeMarco Morgan, '02, and Shannon Travis, '03. It was a joy to see 1980 classmates and Chicagoans Clarence Waldron [Jet magazine], and Rita Thompson [Harpo].

The Black Alumni Network of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, contributing editors E-mail tips, comments to [wdaw69643@aol.com](mailto:wdaw69643@aol.com) or call 800-268-4338

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Campaign '08 coverage, Page 3

**Network** Newsletter /Our 28<sup>th</sup> year/ September 2008/ Vol. 28, No. 9

## Sign up soon and serve as J-alumni mentors

Columbia J-School students could use someone to talk to. We hope that someone can be you.

Through the mentor program, we offer you an opportunity to help a current student get a handle on different aspects of the industry and to form professional relationships with a working journalist. Throughout the next 10 months, the students probably will have a lot of questions and want guidance on making the most out of their time in New York and on getting started in their careers.



The program is designed to help students with issues ranging from coming up with story or Master's project ideas, to crafting resumes, to sending freelance query letters, to working in a newsroom. The program also gives alumni a way to keep in touch with the school and to share their experiences with budding journalists.

We know that many members of the current class would appreciate your taking time to be a mentor. In doing so you would be committing yourself to a minimum of one in-person meeting for general guidance [for mentors who live in the New York City area] and regular follow-up contact via email, telephone or meetings. It is up to the student to contact you, and then for the two of you to determine how often you might be in touch.

You can sign up to be a mentor no matter where you live, as long as you are willing to keep in touch with your student via email and telephone. Ask your fellow J-School classmates and colleagues to join the program.

Please complete the [Alumni Mentor Application Form](#) by Sept. 10.

We will do our best to match students and alumni with similar interests, but we cannot guarantee a perfect match or a student for every volunteer. If you do not think we made a good match or do not hear from your student, please inform us immediately so we can see whether a more appropriate student is available.

*This is a condensed version of the August J-school announcement.*

## Ken M. Jones tribute at Brooklyn church



A celebration of the life and spiritual ascension of Kenneth Maurice Mejeke Moundende Jones is Friday, Sept. 26 at St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Jones, 50, and a 1981 Columbia University journalism graduate who wrote for numerous magazines during his career, died June 13 from congestive heart failure [BA Newsletter, July]. Sibling Pamela D. Jones sent this all-day itinerary:

Celebration from 2 to 4 p.m.

Dinner from 4 to 6:30 p.m.

"Maafa Suite ... A Healing Journey" theater production from 7 to 10 p.m.

Rest and remembrance from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Seaside service from 4 to 6 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 27.

Private service for family and friends from 6 to 9 a.m.

Jones was one of the creative forces behind the [Maafa](#), which is in its 12<sup>th</sup> year at St. Paul. There are costs for dinner and the Maafa. For information call 347-512-1139 or send e-mail to [pamelajones05@aol.com](mailto:pamelajones05@aol.com)

## Unity '08 Follow-up: More perspective on the founding board meeting

By Wayne Dawkins

Reference the meeting of the UNITY Journalists board meeting last July, the first time such an assembly occurred at a convention, and nearly 20 years since the founding meeting in Baltimore. I've added a key paragraph that was trimmed from last month's convention notebook in response to DeWayne Wickham's observation:



The 1988 meeting of black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American leaders, said Wickham, was in reaction to pressure from mainstream media associations that wanted to consolidate the minority associations into one group in order to do one-stop shopping for underwriting, the job fair and the like. NABJ, the oldest and most independent of the associations, resisted the efforts of media associations – like the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the American Newspaper Publishers Association [now known as NAA – Newspaper Association of America] – to define its mission.

The 1988 UNITY meeting, said host president Wickham, was not a logical extension of the 1986 summit of the NABJ and NAHJ boards in Philadelphia.

### Dinner with Senegalese

NABJ President Barbara Ciara called us to add context regarding the \$500-per plate fund raising dinner among NABJ leaders and Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade and his delegation [Wade is third from the left in the photo].



I wrote that \$20,000 from the Senegalese helped to underwrite the event, and that the arrangement had concerned several former NABJ leaders who attended. That is what at least two former leaders told me during conversations in Chicago.

Ciara said none of the Senegalese money paid for the meal. That money, she said, covered "other stuff," entertainment and other needs of the several dozen in the Senegalese delegation.

So, did NABJ sell enough \$500 tickets to cover the dinner? At the end of August, 31

tickets were sold for a gross of \$15,500, NABJ Secretary Deirdre Childress told me. Those numbers were not final, Childress cautioned, and the organization hadn't determined its net gain after it subtracted dinner expenses. Wade on July 25 was the first foreign head of state to address a UNITY-Journalists convention and the second to address NABJ members at an annual convention [the first was Michael Manley of Jamaica in 1989].

### Objectively speaking

In an e-mail sent to 6,800 UNITY-Journalists of color attendees before Barack Obama spoke Sunday, July 27 in Chicago, the umbrella organization advised that "every effort should be made to maintain professional decorum during the event since it will be broadcast to millions of people."

Appearances matter. Some media pundits questioned whether journalists of color could be unbiased during an emotional and historical moment. Another pundit, Patrick Buchanan, '62, questioned the purpose of UNITY, in a [commentary](#) called "Whitey need not apply."

Les Payne, a retired Newsday editor, NABJ founder and fourth president, [returned fire](#) on the nabj.org site.

## Phyl Garland Scholarship Fund update: \$3,800-plus in new gifts

Fellow alumni, we're nearly 70 percent of the way there to the \$100,000 endowment target. At the end of the fiscal year on June 30, plus the first month of the new fiscal year, total pledges and payments were \$68,785, said Kathleen Dowling of the J-School development office in late August.



Last October, the BA Newsletter reported that \$64,920 was in the fund. Since that time, \$3,865 in new pledges and payments have come in. And there is more. Dowling noted that the total does not include an anonymous \$7,500 matching gift. Gifts to the alumni fund will double up to the \$7,500 maximum.

NOW is a good time to double your giving power and drive faster to the endowment finish line.

Once endowed, the scholarship in honor of Professor Phyllis T. Garland [1935-2006, photo, left] will grow future scholarships for needy, talented students. **Lylah Holmes** of Baltimore was the 2007-08 scholarship winner. **Sabrina Ford**, '07, and **Dani McClain**, '06, were previous winners. We anticipate introducing the 2008-09 scholar in the October BA Newsletter.

Call Jodi Lipper at 212-854-4150, No. 3 or [jbl2104@columbia.edu](mailto:jbl2104@columbia.edu)

**MORE ALUMNI FUND NEWS:** The 2008 Annual Journalism Fund surpassed its goal and raised \$634,000 in aid for students, said an Aug. 6 letter from Sharon Meiri Fox to several dozen class campaign agents. Over 1,400 alumni contributed, which represented a 58-percent increase in participation in four years.

## People



**Suzanne Malveaux**, '91, was interviewer for CNN [documentary](#) "Obama Revealed" that aired Aug. 21. The 90-minute program traced the Democratic presidential candidate's childhood development, his education at Columbia and Harvard Law, and his adult choices as a community activist and elected official. "Obama Revealed" was paired with "McCain Revealed," equal time for the Republican presidential candidate.

In an Aug. 8 Louisville Courier-Journal [column](#), **Betty Winston Baye**, '80, asked, is Barack Obama "Too cool to be president? Says who?"

**Corrine Douglas** and **Jacquelyn Gray**, '86, co-wrote the Aug. 25 [op-ed](#), "The cost of silence: Black women's attacks on white feminists during the primaries may be coming back to bite Michelle Obama," for TheRoot.com. **Jill Nelson**, '80, in late August launched "Straight No Chaser," her [blog](#) on NiaOnline.com.

"Diversity on the 2008 Campaign Trail," by **Wayne Dawkins**, '80, asked, "How did race play in the mix of presidential primary messages ... and in the makeup of the men and women who delivered them?" His report was published in the Summer Opportunity Journal, the National Urban League magazine.



**George Smith**, '88 [photo left], was at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing and he [reported](#) on the "redeem team," USA Men's Basketball. The NBA all-stars accomplished their mission and reclaimed the gold medals that were lost at the 2004 games.

**Jocelyn Stewart**, '89, of the Los Angeles Times wrote a July 26 appreciation of the late jazz saxophonist **Johnny Griffin**, '80, a be-bop virtuoso nicknamed the "Little Giant" who was one of the fathers of soul according to Joachim-Ernst Berendt's "Jazz: A Photo History."

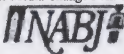
## Jobline

The South Florida *Sun-Sentinel* seeks an aggressive, skilled **Computer-Assisted Reporting specialist** to work with reporters and editors throughout the newsroom on CAR dailies and projects. The specialist will work as part of a CAR team on database acquisition and analysis, mapping, training of newsroom staff and development of intranet Web pages for use by reporters. At the Sun-Sentinel, CAR has been an important part of the newsroom for more than 18 years. The CAR staff works closely with reporters and editors on news stories, from the initial planning stages to the end product. CAR specialists frequently receive bylines. The ideal candidate will be fluent with Microsoft Excel, Access, SQL and ArcGIS and have at least two years experience in CAR work. Web development skills considered a plus. Interested candidates should submit a resume and work samples ASAP to Kathy Pellegrino, recruitment editor, 200 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 or [kpellegrino@sun-sentinel.com](mailto:kpellegrino@sun-sentinel.com).

## Media Institute on Political & Congressional reporting in November

Register early for the NABJ Media Institute on Political & Congressional Reporting, Nov. 21-23 at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. This seminar will analyze the Nov. 4 Presidential and Congressional races and give journalists of color – veterans and rookies – a glimpse into legislative and political reporting first hand.

“Did Politics Change Media or did the Media Change Politics,” is the conference theme. Sessions include: Emerging politics, Getting off the press bus; columnists still matter?; Backpacking; the Campaign Trail



Politics and the numbers; New Media, new game; Do Congressional and State reporting; Follow the cash; story; Blog this!, and Citizen Journalism for young people.

Early registration before Nov. 7 is \$59 for NABJ members and \$99 for others. After Nov. 7, the rate is \$99 for members and \$179 for non-members. Register online at [www.MyNABJ.org](http://www.MyNABJ.org) or visit [www.nabj.org](http://www.nabj.org)

**Dear readers:** Reflect briefly on your response or colleague's response to the Barack Obama acceptance speech Aug. 28. We would like to publish feedback in the next edition. – *the editors*

The Black Alumni Network of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, contributing editors  
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## World War II story by '80 J-school grad is in theaters



"Miracle at St. Anna," a World War II drama directed by Spike Lee, opened Sept. 26 in theaters. The movie is based on the 2003 novel by James McBride, '80. McBride, author of the bestseller "The Color of Water," and this year's antebellum-era novel "Song Yet Sung" [BA Newsletter, July], wrote the screenplay.

"Miracle at St. Anna" is ambitious. It is a story about real-life black soldiers who fought Nazis in Italy during 1944, the turning point of the war. In addition to unearthing an important story about black World War II vets, Lee and McBride [bottom photo] break new ground in telling a story about war in the mountainous Tuscany region. The now romantic vacation spot was treacherous back then. Post-Mussolini Italy fragmented into civil war. Fascist and partisan sympathizers aligned with Allied or Nazi warriors, or switched sides when it was convenient and betrayed their brothers and sisters in the villages. The movie and novel in fact spotlights the August 1944 massacre by Nazis of 560 civilians in a Tuscan village because of a spy's betrayal. Many media reviews gave *Miracle at St. Anna* "A"s or "B"s for effort but "C"s for execution. Sympathetic reviews from the [New York Times](#) and [SeeingBlack.com](#) concluded that Lee and McBride tried to tell too many stories in *too much* time, two hours and 40 minutes.



For this viewer, the first 40 minutes of movie jumped around nervously before settling down. Visually, "Miracle" showed evidence of Lee maturing as a top filmmaker.

The weekend [box office](#) receipts placed "Miracle" at No. 9 with \$3.5 million in receipts, a weak opening compared to the \$29.2 million in receipts from No. 1 "Eagle Eye" and \$13.6 million from No. 2 "Nights in Rodanthe."

Continued on back page



## The color purple, Virginia Style:

A new hue promises to shake up race for White House



Virginia was a reliable Republican presidential state for 44 years. The last time this commonwealth gave its electoral votes to a Democrat, Lyndon B. Johnson occupied the White House.

This season Democrats believe they can win the state for Barack Obama. Instead of seceding Virginia to John McCain like decades of previous elections, the Democrats are competing fiercely for the turf.

Read more of Wayne Dawkins' Sept. 22 [commentary](#)

## Can McCain make sound decisions?

VP choice undermines GOP candidate's credibility

Charles Krauthammer, a Barack Obama skeptic, was [dismayed](#) by John McCain's choice of Sarah Palin as vice presidential running mate. Palin, the unknown with a thin public record, undermines the McCain campaign Obama critique that the first term U.S. Senator and former Illinois state senator is not experienced enough to lead the country.

Krauthammer's observation was a damning assessment of McCain's judgment. After [26 years](#) in Washington, is the senator from Arizona qualified to lead based on harebrained choices like Palin as his co-pilot? The answer suggests no.

Read more of the Sept. 10 [commentary](#)

## New Jersey's Bergen Record ousts Lawrence Aaron, J-70

The Record of Hackensack, Bergen County, N.J. announced that **Lawrence Aaron, '70**, retired last month, but the newspaper's lone black columnist said he was let go. "I am definitely not retired in any sense of the word," Aaron told [Journal-isms](#), Richard Prince's online media column on Sept. 3. "My position was eliminated. I'm actively looking for a job and can't think about the 'R' word for at least 15 years."



On Sept. 29, Aaron told the BA Newsletter, "I've got feelers out and a few possibilities, some of them in news operations, but also a couple of academic bids for next semester, and one in corporate communications. I'll let you know when I'm coming in for a landing. Far from 'retiring,' I'm looking forward to many more years as a working journalist." Aaron was with the Record for 10 years, the last five as a columnist.

## Jobline & Opportunities

KUOW-FM in Seattle seeks an **investigative reporter**. The location is the University of Washington, one of the nation's premier educational and research institutions. To apply, visit [www.washington.edu/admin/hr/jobs/](http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/jobs/) Click on "Staff Jobs" and search for Req# 48587.

Black Power, a daily online magazine designed to inject wit, hipness and edge into the discussion of viewpoints currently shaping black culture, is **looking for submissions of articles** for publication on our new site launching this month. The articles can discuss any aspect of news, politics, sports, entertainment, or general pop culture pieces.

We are interested in articles with some connection to blackness and urban life all over the world. In a tone reminiscent of the Village Voice, we are looking for a wide variety of topics from hard-core news and analysis, to book and movie reviews to features and human interest stories and opinion pieces. We want a variety of opinions across the spectrum of views written using a variety of styles, including immersion style reporting, narrative features, straight news, and "new journalism" creative styles. We are also interested in satire and writings by humorists as well as comic strip artists. Black Power also extends an invitation to freelance illustrators to complement our riveting stories with eye-catching illustrations.

We accept articles on a rolling basis and all writers will be compensated. Comic strip artists and illustrators will also be compensated positions commensurate with experience. To submit article proposals or manuscripts or to ask questions, please contact the Black Power editorial team at [info@blackpower.com](mailto:info@blackpower.com). **Ericka Blount, '04**, is supervising editor of this new venture.

## People



**Lisa Diane Cox, '92**, is the new Prime News weekend producer at KTLA-TV 5, the CW, in Los Angeles. Cox had been freelancing at the station since June of 2005 as a writer/fill-in producer. Now she is staff. Cox remains president of the Black Journalists Association of Southern California, a NABJ affiliate chapter, and she remains a lecturer on the part-time faculty at California State University/Long Beach, where she teaches Introduction to Broadcast Writing in the journalism department.

... "To my fellow romantics who dreamed along," wrote **Akua Lezli Hope, '77**. She called attention to the New York Times article that reported [Marpessa Dawn](#), who played Eurydice in the classic 1959 Brazilian film "Black Orpheus," died at age 74.

## Phyllis T. Garland Fund reminder

Last month we reported that \$69,000 in payments and pledges were collected so \$31,000 remains to be raised in order to create a permanent \$100,000 endowment in honor of Garland [1935-2006]. Funds in hand do not include an anonymous \$7,500 matching gift. Now is a good time to DOUBLE your giving power and drive faster to the finish line. Call Jodi Lipper at 212-854-4150, No. 3, or send e-mail to [jbl2104@columbia.edu](mailto:jbl2104@columbia.edu)

## **'Miracle at St. Anna,' an overdue war story/** Continued from page 1

The [Kansas City Star](#) review of "Miracle" noted that 15,000 blacks fought in the segregated 92nd Buffalo Soldier Division. The survivors are now in the 80s and are dying or in fragile health.

Despite cinematic flaws, "Miracle at St. Anna" deserves a viewing for its inspiring and entertaining moments, and for telling a story that's long overdue. -- *Wayne Dawkins*

Front page IMAGE credits: Movie poster, [www.seattlepi.com](#), Lee and McBride, [www.daylife.com](#)

## **Deaths: J-school dean Osborn Elliott, diversity visionary Nancy Hicks Maynard**

Two icons of journalism died a week apart last month. [Nancy Hicks Maynard](#), 61, a young New York Times and New York Post reporter in the late 1960s, died Sept. 21 from multiple organ failure. With husband the late Robert C. Maynard, they established the Institute for Journalism Education in California in the 1970s and were credited with training hundreds of journalists of color over three decades for the mainstream media. The couple also purchased the Oakland Tribune in the 1980s. For a decade it was a black-owned and operated metropolitan daily.

On Sept. 28, [Osborn Elliott](#), dean of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism from 1979-86, died at age 83. After stepping down from administration, Elliott served as the George T. Delacorte professor at the J-school until 1994. Elliott was editor of Newsweek magazine from 1961-76 and was credited with revitalizing the newsweekly by growing circulation and publishing specials reports such as "The Negro in America: What must be done" and "Women in revolt."

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [1980-] publishes monthly. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. Log on to [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](#)  
Wayne J. Dawkins – editor, Betty Winston Baye, Kissette Bundy, Angela Chatman, Cheryl Devall, Dan Holly, Keith Rushing, contributing editors

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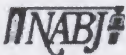
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## Student chapter resumes operation at J-school

The Columbia University Association of Black Journalists resumed operation last month after dormancy for about two years, said Daarel Burnette, president of the NABJ affiliate. The chapter at the Graduate School of Journalism in New York was recognized by the Washington, D.C.-area based National Association of Black Journalists.



Burnette, who is studying politics in the Master of Arts program, said the revitalized chapter has 15 students. Professor **Addie Rimmer, '78**, is the chapter adviser. The CABJ was last active in 2006, according to Burnette. June Cross, another professor, said the chapter functioned when Phyllis T. Garland was teaching there. The professor was the adviser and she retired in 2005. It was not immediately known when the chapter was founded.

The Columbia ABJ will join City University of New York and Syracuse as student chapters in [NABJ Region I](#).

## Alumni giving continue to climb at Columbia J-school

Alumni giving during the first quarter of fiscal year 2008-09 was \$142,000, 21-percent more than the \$113,000 received during the same three-month period a year ago, Jodi Lipper of the development office told J-school class agents last month.

Giving increased at a time when journalists are being laid off, fired or bought out from news operations that continue to cut staff in an industry that declining or repositioning, depending on who you ask. Meanwhile, the price tag for a Masters degree at the J-school is steep. Class of '09 students are billed \$60,000 for Master of Science studies, five times the cost 35 years ago in 1973 [BA Newsletter, August]



Fund raising continues to permanently endow a scholarship in honor of [Phyllis T. Garland](#). As of September, \$69,000 was collected or pledged toward a goal of \$100,000. A challenge grant is in effect, so donor gifts will be matched 1-to-1. Contact Lipper, 212-854-4150, [jb2104@columbia.edu](mailto:jb2104@columbia.edu) to give to the fund.

The fourth Phyllis T. Garland/BA Network scholar is currently attending the J-school and benefits from \$5,000 in aid. The student's name was not available at press time but we will profile the student as soon as the information is available.

## Politics and press: Trotter Group, media institute, both in D.C.

The Williams Monroe [Trotter Group](#), 30 African-American columnists, will do post-election analysis of the presidential and Congressional races at their annual meeting Nov. 9-12 at Howard University in Washington.

Trotter Group members include **Betty Winston Baye, '80** [[The Courier-Journal](#), Louisville, Ky.] and **Wayne Dawkins, '80**, [[politicsincolor.com](http://politicsincolor.com)].

Nov. 7 is the discounted pre-registration deadline for the 2<sup>nd</sup> [NABJ Media Institute](#) on Political and Congressional Reporting, "Did Politics Change Media or did Media Change Politics?" Nov. 21-23 at Georgetown University.

# Poem for Barack Obama

-Akua Lezli Hope, J-'77

What we need, Barack, is a secular saint  
You must be eloquent and fiery  
You must be comfortably fierce  
companionably forceful, the father  
friend, brother buddy, expert  
at fishing out fears and dollars,  
shooting hoops across slanting courts,  
several sports and many mind games



Learned in a way we'll find friendly, kindly  
You must always impress but never embarrass  
You must be the best guest integral to the party  
and only occasionally its life  
Be the best host, serving everything  
we want to eat, spice, yet spice correctly

There are the things we can't say out loud  
because others are listening:  
you remind us of us  
and you are the other  
You have heard it all  
but we don't know if we can tell  
You must be four times as good  
and you must work seven times as hard  
You must be superfast and razor keen  
but not cut, you must shine but not dazzle  
You may be diamond, you may be gold  
gleam but do not glitter

We love the sun and know the closer we are  
the more likely we will burn  
Barack, be a temperate sun  
a balmy breeze though so much  
needs be blown down and away,  
glass houses, false fronts, muck and dirt  
swept away so we can rebuild  
but no cyclone no tornado,

Clean, advance the dream  
March us from sleep to waken  
Rebuild the home of hope  
with your audacious bricks:  
sturdy faith in our transcendent dream  
unfurls flags of longing  
pinned on every chest, even if unseen  
long stripes sizzle,  
sing of democratic pain,  
wide stars glisten with history's unappeased tears

Step by steady step,  
resolve our brokenness in your wholeness  
You are so long awaited  
challenge this culture of denial  
with your yes  
win with Ghandi's wisdom  
lead us, lead us, lead us  
to peace.



*The writer and artist is based in Corning, N.Y.*

[www.absolutearts.com/portfolios/akualezli/](http://www.absolutearts.com/portfolios/akualezli/)

Photo credit: Senate.gov

## Where did black Republicans go?

Don't attribute their scarcity to Obama mania



Where did the black Republicans go? Don't attribute their scarcity to Obama mania. The evaporation of black Republicans that began before the 2008 presidential election and suggests trouble signs about African-American participation in a two-party political system.

A new poll by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies reported a 60-percent decline in black identification with the Republican Party compared to four years ago.

Read more of **Wayne Dawkins'** Oct. 29 [commentary](#).

## People

**Michael Oneal**, '88, published "Sun Ra: Jazz Messiah" by Mississippi Mahn. "Essentially," Oneal explained, "I've self-published my journalism school master's thesis." The quasi-biography/polemic of the late interplanetary cosmic jazzman was dedicated to Prof. Luther P. Jackson [1925-2008], who died in April. Visit [www.sunrajazzmessiah.com](http://www.sunrajazzmessiah.com) for details. ... **A'Lelia Bundles**, '76, served as one of the duPont Award judges for a weekend last month. ...

In January, **Tony Chapelle**, '84, started at Agenda, a trade newsletter. "We're part of the Financial Times group," he said. "We report on corporate boards of directors and what's going on in corporate governance, concerns over compliance with **Sarbanes-Oxley**, and corporate strategy." ... **Reginald Stuart**, '71, will be a presenter at the Nov. 12 [NABJ Media Institute Webinar](#), "Mastering Newsroom Politics: Making Alliances and Wielding Influence."

The **Black Alumni Network** of Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism was founded in May 1980 and since July the group has published a monthly newsletter. The BA Newsletter's mission is to keep people connected. We publish job changes and moves, news about books and films published or produced by alumni, and family milestones. And of course we keep alumni connected to news from the Columbia GSJ. Log on to our Web site at [www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/](http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/alumni/services/ban/) or see our link on the home page of [www.blackjournalist.com](http://www.blackjournalist.com) **Wayne J. Dawkins** – editor, **Betty Winston Baye**, **Kissette Bundy**, **Angela Chatman**, **Cheryl Devall**, **Dan Holly**, **Keith Rushing**, contributing editors E-mail tips, comments, suggestions to [wdawk69643@aol.com](mailto:wdawk69643@aol.com)

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# **Black Alumni Network**

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**Author, musician, distinguished alum, 2**

Newsletter / Our 28<sup>th</sup> year / December 2008 / Vol. 28, No. 12

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## **4<sup>th</sup> Phyl Garland scholar at Columbia J-school**

Jessica Hopper, a student in the 2008-09 class at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, was named the fourth Black Alumni Network/Phyllis Garland Scholar.



Hopper is a 2008 graduate of Washington and Lee University of Virginia. She is pursuing a Master of Science in Broadcast Journalism.

"I have spent my entire life on the move," said Hopper in a written statement. "My dad was in the Air Force and for me that meant moving every year or two of my life. The longest I've lived anywhere was in Lexington, Va., where I went to college. At Washington and Lee, I discovered journalism. For me, nothing beats the adrenaline rush of working on deadline. I think journalism is a powerful and

important job. While the public may not always respect your job, they need you to be citizens in our democracy.

"I hope to work in international reporting. My studies abroad in Senegal, India and Barbados taught me that there are stories to be told beyond the borders of the United States. A woman in rural Virginia may never meet a Senegalese woman on her own, but a journalist can introduce the two to each other through telling the stories of both women. That is what I hope to make my life's work."

Hopper has participated in summer internships at the Miami Herald, Tampa Tribune, National Organization for Women and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

Previous scholarship winners were Lylah Holmes [2007], Sabrina Ford [2006] and Dani McLain [2005]. The BAN/Phyl Garland Scholarship is \$5,000. Garland [1935-2006] was the first tenured black woman professor at the J-school, where she taught for 31 years. She retired in 2004.

In order to fully endow the scholarship so its annual interest can provide the student gifts, pledges are needed from alumni and friends to meet the \$100,000 minimum. About 70 percent of the funds have been raised, according to the development office. Send gifts, payable to Columbia University and noting "Phyllis T. Garland Scholarship" in the lower left to Columbia University GSJ, 2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027. Attention: Jodi Lipper or Sharon M. Fox.

## Author, musician to receive distinguished Columbia J-alumni award next spring

[James McBride, J-'80](#), will be one of the spring 2009 Columbia University Journalism Distinguished Alumni award winners, the graduate school announced late last month.

"The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother," McBride's 1996 book, was a New York Times bestseller. The book has been adopted in numerous [public school](#) systems across the U.S.



McBride's "Miracle at St. Anna," a 2003 novel about black World War II soldiers in Italy, was made into a movie by filmmaker Spike Lee in September. Last summer, McBride published his second novel, "Song Yet Sung," a story about slavery along the Eastern Shore of Maryland a decade before the Civil War.

McBride is a musician too, a saxophonist. In April 2007, he wrote a [National Geographic](#) feature on hip-hop's global reach, and before that he has performed, produced and written songs performed by Anita Baker and the late Grover Washington Jr.

McBride will be honored during the Alumni Weekend April 23-26 next year. Save the date. Irena Irena Choi Stern '01, Director of Alumni Relations, said another award winner, [Tim Weiner '79](#), is a friend of McBride's.

## A round of change for the house

Black America, the press, and Obama too will adjust to new rules



The votes cast by several million new, young voters last month made the difference in pushing President-elect Barack Obama across the finish line. Number crunchers are now reporting that voter turnout was slightly, not significantly higher than four years ago, however big differences this election were better organization by Democrats and independents vs. apathy and disorganization by Republicans.

Obama, the Democrat, received 95 percent of black support and 60 percent Hispanic support. So much change. So what can journalists and Black America expect after Jan. 20, 2009?

"Being the first black president changes everything and changes nothing," said

William Douglas, White House correspondent for McClatchy Newspapers.

Read more of [Wayne Dawkins' Nov. 25 commentary](#).



"A number of well-known black Democrats and Obama supporters," according to [Keith Rushing, '90](#), of the Advancement Project "are pathetically trying to tamp down expectations that Obama will appoint a racially diverse Cabinet." Read the entire commentary at [Just Democracy](#).

Visit [www.justdemocracyblog.org](http://www.justdemocracyblog.org)

Continued on next page



"Unfortunately, Obama's landslide victory over John McCain was accomplished with no help from Kentucky," wrote **Betty Winston Baye, '80**, of the Courier-Journal of Louisville. "... Obama lost Kentucky by a whopping 16 percentage points. ... Three days after the vote, I was in Washington, D.C. for the the [Trotter Group's](#) annual post-election meeting. One speaker joked the Obama's North Carolina and Virginia victories suggest those two states have seceded from the Confederacy.

"So Kentucky's vote means what?" Read the entire Nov. 16 [commentary](#).

## People



**Suzanne Malveaux, '91**, of CNN [photo] was among the panelists at the "Covering the Next White House" session at the Nov. 22 NABJ Media Institute Watergate Conference on Political & Congressional Reporting. **Dorothy B. Gilliam, '61**, moderated the session. **Kirk Jackson, '82**, and **Martina Stewart, '07**, were among the 70 participants at the conference which asked "did politics change media or did media change politics?"

Yes, the presidential and Congressional elections were huge and historic, yet there were substantial local races too. **Lise Chandler White, '80**, media and communications coordinator for the city of Virginia Beach, Va., [hugged](#) five-term Mayor Meyera Oberndorf, who lost a close election to Will Sessoms.

"A Life Around the World: Surprise International Career Leads to Global Odyssey," is a [new book](#) by **Edward Omotoso, '67**. In an electronic postcard, Omotoso let us know that the book [Publish America] has a chapter on his year at Columbia J-school.

HEY, anyone planning to cover the Barack Obama [inauguration](#) on Jan. 20? If so, is anyone willing to share some brief personal observations on the event to run in our February newsletter. If yes, send them by Friday, Jan. 25 to [wdawkins4bj@aol.com](mailto:wdawkins4bj@aol.com)

## Holiday gift giving: Support alumni and friends, buy their recent books

Here's a recap of books we've noted this year:

"Sun Ra: Jazz Messiah," by Mississippi Mahn [**Michael Oneal, '88**]  
[www.sunrajazzmessiah.com](http://www.sunrajazzmessiah.com) ; "[Pig Candy](#): Taking my Father South, Taking My Father Home," by **Lise Funderburg, '91** [Free Press];

"[Song Yet Sung](#)," **James McBride, '80**, [Riverhead Books]; "[One Drop](#): My Father's Hidden Life – A Story of Race and Family Secrets," by Bliss Broyard [Little Brown and Company].

## Jobline

BET.com seeks a Washington, D.C.-based, online copy editor. The candidate must have a passion for excellence and be familiar with Web publishing standards. A broad knowledge of R&B, hip hop, pop culture and African-American current events is required. In addition to finding buried leads and fact checking, the copy editor will be expected to write headlines and deliver edits in a fast-paced, deadline-focused environment. Working within BET.com's matrixed organizational structure, informal work atmosphere and virtual Web-based network will require attention to detail, flexibility and responsiveness. A sense of humor is a plus. Applicants should send resume and cover letter to: [tanu.henry@staff.bet.com](mailto:tanu.henry@staff.bet.com)

The Knight Center for Specialized Journalism, one of the nation's premier institutions devoted to the professional development of journalists, is seeking an experienced, enthusiastic individual to be its next director. The Merrill College is committed to achieving diversity in its faculty, students and curriculum, and it welcomes applicants who can help achieve these objectives. The Center, which operates as part of the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland, conducts week-long seminars for journalists on such specialized topics as law, the sciences, religion, demographics, the business of sports and many other subjects. Since 1988, more than 2,700 fellows from 500 news organizations have been Knight Fellows. The center is funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The director oversees all aspects of the center, from constructing its programs to recruiting fellows to managing the budget. An effective director will combine substantial journalism experience with intellectual curiosity, in-depth knowledge of converged news operations, media savvy and an engaging personality. We are looking for an innovative colleague who can both lead and contribute as our program grows and adapts to changing technology and business models in journalism. Send c.v., the names of three references, and a statement of interest in the position to [search@jmail.umd.edu](mailto:search@jmail.umd.edu) and a physical copy to: Search Chair, Knight Center Director Philip Merrill College of Journalism 1117 Journalism Building University of Maryland College Park, MD 20742

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